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THERESE DUNOYER.

A NOVEL:

BY EUGENE SUE,

AUTHOR OF "MYSTERIES OF PARIS," "MATILDA," ETC. ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

FOR THIS EDITION.

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P. B.

THERESE DUNOYER.

CHAPTER I.

THE PREDICTION OF GWENC HLAN.*

The wintry wind blew a hurricane from the west: the huge black billows thundered and tossed, as far as the eye could reach; and the setting sun, red as blood, threw upon the granite cliffs which line the coast of Brittany, a baleful gleam of light, as sad and ominous as a last farewell.

The troubled ocean moaned;—the night was falling;—the green crest of the combing surf lost its transparency; and, as it broke, the foam which crowned it became whiter, in contrast with the inky hue it had assumed. Far—far from shore, tossed by the wave, and swept by the bitter spray, might be seen a fragile skiff, floating at the mercy of the sea. The darkness thickened;—the storm increased; and, at length, it was only by the broad flashes of lightning that this little bark, with its occupants—whose destiny seemed already fixed—could be discovered. Sometimes, with its sails skimming the surface of the water, as it yielded to the fury of the blast, it flitted across the summit of some mountain billow; and then again disappearing in the gulf beneath, for a period it would be lost to view, and apparently to hope.

Of the two, who manned the little craft in her perilous situation, one held the helm and guided her course with a firm and steady hand;—it was Mor Nader, the pilot of the Isle of Sein.

Mor Nader was said to be gifted with the power of second sight; and, as a seer, he was an object of dread to all who knew him. His predictions were ever of evil to come; and, what added tenfold to their terrors, they were seldom known to fail. His language, figurative and poetical, resembled those mystic rhymes of the old Armorican bards, which have descended even to our own times. Mor Nader was old; his long white hair, streaming in the wind, was unconfined by cap or hood. The cold was bitter; but his breast and his nervous arms were bare. A ferocious scowl overspread his countenance, and his keen gray eyes gleamed with a sort of wild delirium. His voice, hollow, but sonorous as a bell, was heard above the whistling of the blast, and the howling of the storm. His spirit seemed to rise, as the tempest became more and more appalling; and he sang in the dialect of the region of Cornouaille, with a rough and guttural accent, a strain of strange and sinister meaning; the burthen of which seemed to run as follows:

"Not that I fear; I fear not to die;
Not that I fear; I've lived long enough, I."

At the prow of the bark was seated another man. He was young, and was known as Ewen de Ker Ellio.

Ewen de Ker Ellio was lord of the old castle of Treff Hartlog, which reared its granite walls, surmounted by sharp-pointed turrets, two leagues down the coast, upon the summit of the solitary cliff called the Black Crag. The manor attached to this castle was bounded by those dangerous points upon the coast, known as *The Gulf of Trespassers*, and *The Race of Stragglers*.

We have said that Ewen was young. His long brown locks floated in the wind; his countenance was bold and open; his eyes were riveted upon the old man, and he seemed to listen to Mor Nader's wild and strange chant with curiosity, not unmingled with uneasiness;—while occasionally a sad, but sweet smile, would flit across his features.

When the pilot had concluded the first stanza of his ditty, Ewen addressed him in the same dialect of Cornouaille which the former had used: "You have told me, that the hour approached in which I should know my destiny. Common sense forbids me to believe that you are wiser than others, and reproaches me for my folly in listening to one who would deceive me. You have told me, that upon the sea alone could you foretell my fate. Now go on; for the storm increases, and we shall soon have enough to do to manage the boat, unless we are willing that both our destinies should be accomplished immediately."

Mor Nader continued his song, as if the mystic rhymes were the only answer he deigned to give to the questions of his companion:

"What must happen who need care?
Who his fate could ere beware?
Thrice the doomed one must die,
Ere his bones in peace shall lie"

* One of the most popular songs of Brittany—dialect of Cornouaille.

"Is my death, then, so near at hand? is this your prophecy?" cried Ewen.

"Why need you care?" cried the old man, in bitter irony: "am I not an old impostor?"

"Speak! answer me!"

"Oh, no; I am but a deceiver: how should I read a man's coming doom upon his forehead?"

"Will you answer me?"

"If I should say, 'Ewen de Ker Ellio, commend yourself to God, for you will shortly be whelmed beneath these waves;' of what avail would it be? would you believe me? no. I had better tell you, 'Ewen, you shall live long and happily; a lovely bride shall bless your marriage couch, and your children's children shall play around your knees:'" and the old man's wild and fiendish laugh rang out above the voice of the storm.

A superstitious terror began to creep into the soul of Ewen: he felt as if under the influence of some unknown power, and regretted that he had placed himself at the mercy of his strange companion.

"Explain yourself, Mor Nader," he said at last; "if any danger threatens me, let me know it."

"In what month died your grandfather, Ewen de Ker Ellio?" exclaimed the old man, in the tones of a hyena.

"In the *black month*," (November) answered Ewen.

"And your father?"

"In the *black month!* in the *black month!*" repeated Ewen, shuddering, he knew not why.

"And what month is this?"

"The *black month!*" faltered Ewen; but immediately raising his voice, he cried, "Pilot! pilot! take care: avoid this coming wave—damnation! do you want to drown us, do you?"

He could not finish; for a towering wave swept over the skiff, and throwing her upon her side, almost filled her with water.

Mor Nader sat firmly at the helm, his head erect; his fiery eye, unconscious of danger, fixed on vacancy; his soul wrapped in wild and fearful misgivings.

"Here comes another!" screamed Ewen. "My God! to-morrow our bodies will be bleaching upon the sands."

"True, true!" exclaimed the old man; "to-morrow, your body will lie upon the sands, and the sea-weed for a funeral wreath, shall twine around your damp and pallid brow. If your time has come you must die; for the *black month* is the *black month*." And Mor Nader continued his chant in a voice more wild and terrible than before. Thus rang the rhyme:

"The sea-horse is coming to meet me in wrath;
The scared waves scatter, full wide from his path:
His crest is as white as the fresh-driven snow,
And his horns of bright silver gleam death from his brow."

Mor Nader had now nearly abandoned the helm. A second wave, more towering than the last, swept over the skiff, and caused her to quake and shudder like a living thing. Ewen, nearly prostrated by the shock, started to his feet, and exclaimed, in a menacing tone, "Wretch! do you purpose to destroy us?" and then, in accents of despair, he ejaculated, "Fool! fool that I was, thus to venture myself with this madman!"

"Oh, no!" returned the pilot, in tones of bitter irony; "I am only an old impostor. I cannot hear the funeral dirge of those about to die, wailed out by the spirits of the air. I cannot see the hand of death, when it is laid upon those ready to perish. Ewen de Ker Ellio! will you call me an impostor, when, whelmed beneath this raging sea, you hear the billows thunder above your head? Do you see, far—far behind, by the lightning's flash, yon mountain wave with foaming crest, which follows us? It comes on;—it gains upon us. I hear it murmur;—I understand its voice. It says, 'No! no! Mor Nader is no impostor; he has called me to bear upon my icy bosom the body of the dead: I am here, and where is the dead?'"

The strange ecstacy of the pilot had arrived at its acme; his wild spirit, excited to delirium by the grand and appalling spectacle before him—galled by his wounded pride—blinded by rage and ferocity—willing to sacrifice his own life, so that he might wreak his vengeance upon Ewen for his incredulity, and accomplish the fulfillment of his prediction;—he abandoned the bark to itself, and stood erect in the stern. There, with his sinewy arms crossed over his naked chest, with frowning brow, and an ominous glare of his fiery eyes, he looked the incarnation of the demon of the storm.

The boat, no longer guided, whirled quickly around once or twice—a fluttering was heard—a light crash—and the white sail, torn from its mast, swept away upon the blast, and disappeared in the darkening mist!

"We are lost!" cried Ewen, as he threw himself upon the old man, and attempted to possess himself of the helm.

Mor Nader repulsed him with violence, and a deadly struggle took place between these two men, while floating, at random, over the abyss which already yawned to receive them.

The old man received a blow, which made the blood spring from his forehead. Ewen, struck down by a heavy bar, fell at his length in the bottom of the boat, and, half-submerged by the water, believed that his last hour had indeed come. He commended his soul to God, closed his eyes, and awaited the approach of death with calmness.

The helpless little craft was cast hither and thither upon the waves, and the old man, with bloody brow and haggard eye, wailed out his death-song.

Ewen, half-reviving, thought he listened to

the chants of the damned in another world, while the following words rung in his deafened ear:

"Old crow of the sea, tell quickly to me
What you tear with your claws and your beak, as I see.
'Sir, the gory head of a chieftain dead;
And I tear out his eyes, so bloody and red!'"

"Pilot! pilot of hell! is it to the regions of darkness, that you conduct me?" murmured Ewen, whose bewildered mind began to partake of the frenzy which possessed Mor Nader. "Am I indeed dying?"

"Was I an impostor? was I an impostor then!" screamed the old man, as with bleeding brow he leaned over Ewen, who lay helpless across the thwarts of the boat.

"No! no! you are no impostor: pardon me. But before I die, you who know all of ill, tell me, I beseech you, who is the original of that mysterious portrait; what is that pallid face with eyes of deepest black, which even now haunts me like a spectre of remorse!"

"'Tis a flower of the black month! a blossom of the tomb!" returned the pilot.

Another wave swept over the boat. Ewen, overcome by the shock, was unable to stir, and the little craft seemed already settling down beneath him; but the wild and ill omened song of Mor Nader again rang out above the tumult of the elements:

"'Sea wolf! sea wolf! what have you there,
Which with ravening fun you rend and tear.'
''Tis the heart of one, more cruel than I,
Which he stained with crimes of the deepest dye.'
'Ho! viper of ocean, with poison dread
Why watch you the lips of the newly dead?'
'I watch for his soul, when it takes its flight,
And I'll follow it down to the realms of night!'"

A mountain of brine came down, like an avalanche, upon the sinking boat, and it disappeared from the face of the waters. Ewen, in despair, felt himself drawn down by the eddy into the fathomless abyss.

CHAPTER II.

THE CASTLE OF TREFF HARTLOG.

The western coast of Brittany which stretches from Brest to Werntz, is bleak and inhospitable, while at short intervals its lofty headlands frown in gloomy grandeur over the sea. Between the Peaks of Karnarvan and the Race, lies a bay of such evil repute that it has received the name of the Gulf of Trespassers. A little farther on is the Race of the Stragglers, and the Rock of the Dead; names but too justly significant of the dangers which beset the mariner, whom the furious and almost constant westerly winds happened to drive upon this iron-bound coast. Not far from this vicinity took place the catastrophe which we have related in the previous chapter.

Upon the summit of the lofty peaks, which lined like sentinels the Armorican shore, were posted the ancient castles of the Breton nobles; rearing their granite walls, capped by pointed roofs, toward heaven. And here it was, that not far from the little town of St. Michael, and overlooking the Gulf of Trespassers, stood, as we have said before, the chateau of Treff Hartlog; from time immemorial the strong hold of the baronial family of Ker de Ellio, one of the most considerable among the nobility of Brittany.

It were futile to inquire, what induced the founders of Treff Hartlog to select this wild and solitary place for their abode. Its granite walls seemed a part of the rock upon which it stood; in color, it was of the same dark and time-stained hue; the same yellow moss clung to its rough and rugged sides, while its angles were equally bleached and weather-worn. The main body of the building stood at the foot of a court-yard, planted with box and dwarf-oak, once beautifully and symmetrically trimmed, but now neglected and run wild. The left wing abutted upon a tower of considerable height, which was almost overgrown by ivy; the right wing had long been in ruins.

The ruined portion of the edifice almost overhung the sea. From a sort of terrace, formed of the *debris* of the interior, one looked directly down upon the narrow channel which separated the Gulf of Trespassers from the Island of the Sein, while the ocean extended beyond the far-away horizon. The farms, belonging to the manor of Ker de Ellio, lay scattered upon the plain below, embosomed in groves of verdant oaks, which agreeably broke the monotony of the landscape of barren sand plains, which stretched landward as far as the eye could reach.

Ewen de Ker Ellio had left Treff Hartlog in the morning, to take an excursion upon the sea with Mor Nader, the pilot of the Island of the Sein. The result of that adventure we have seen; but it was not yet known at the castle.

The time was the month of November, 1838. The day, which had been dark and stormy, was waning fast; and a huge fire roared and blazed in the great chimney of the castle kitchen. The scene within would have been a treasure to a Flemish artist. The vast apartment was lighted by a single window—long, narrow, and glazed with small pieces of greenish glass, set in frames of lead. Such was the thickness of the walls, that within the deep recess, formed by the window, was found abundant room to place a table of old-fashioned black walnut, and an old-fashioned leather easy chair, with its high and well-worn back.

Seated in this chair, smoking the white clay pipe, which is used by the Armorican peasantry, sat Ann Jann, the aged nurse of Ewen de Ker Ellio, diligently plying her distaff. The daylight had nearly disappeared and the characteristic and expressive profile

of the old woman, alone, was thrown into strong relief, by the last rays of the setting sun, as they pierced, with difficulty, through the dim green glass of the window. About her wrinkled brow was wound the snow-white handkerchief, which constitutes the head-dress of the old Breton dames; and the remainder of her costume, which consisted of a boddice of blue cloth, with silver buttons, above a skirt of brown stuff, turned up with scarlet, had not been varied for forty years.

The nightfall and the apartment, was illuminated by the flickering light of the fire alone. As this blazed up from time to time, it discovered, for a moment, other articles of furniture belonging to the apartment. Here, stood a massive oak table of antique pattern—there, a dresser covered with articles of crockery and well-burnished tin;—while fastened to the walls, at regular intervals, quaintly carved in bas-relief, and richly gilded, were the portraits of the patron saints of Brittany: St. Guehenoe, St. Hermok and St. Goulvenn. The principal ornament of this character, and by far the hugest, was a representation of the chapel of Falgoat—so famous as being the hermitage of Saleun—upon which, surrounded by a sort of golden glory, was the effigy of that blessed child himself. For this chapel, Ann Jann cherished feelings of the deepest devotion; and to this saint she had made a vow, pending the infancy of her foster-child, Ewen de Ker Ellio.

The wind increased in its fury. The windows and doors of the old kitchen rattled and shook, and the rain and hail beat incessantly against the thick green panes. Ann Jann, from time to time peered anxiously through the casement, and at length rose hastily, placed her distaff upon the table, and addressed herself, in the Breton dialect, to some one in the apartment, who had been till then invisible.

"Les en Goch! Les en Goch!" she cried; "what a time for my foster-son to be out in!"

"Wind and rain!—pshaw! the chief saw worse weather than this, when he kept the forest of Menez Chom," replied the husband of Ann Jann, without altering his position.

Les en Goch presented, in his own person, a fair ensample of the Breton of Brittany. A race as firm and rugged as their own Armorican rocks—a race at once loyal and religious; strong in their prejudices, but devoted to the cause they embrace; faithful and brave, intelligent and discreet. Seated by a chimney nook, the fire-light, when it shone upon him, revealed a countenance burned by the sun and tanned by spray. His long black hair was scarcely touched with gray, though more than fifty winters had shed their snows upon his head. He was of the middling stature, active and muscular. His brow was wrinkled—his hazel eyes deep set and piercing. His nose inclined to the aquiline, and his massive under-jaw was projecting. The grave, pensive, and almost melancholy expression of his countenance, announced the man of thought. Clad in the rude but picturesque costume of Brittany, with one leg crossing the other, resting his elbow upon his knees, and his chin upon his hand, he seemed, as he leisurely and quietly smoked his pipe, a most appropriate ornament to the vast chimney-piece of the castle kitchen.

A huge yellow wolf-dog, with his long sharp muzzle, and ears erect and pointed, sat gravely before the fire, apparently enjoying its warmth, and ever and anon brushing the hearth with his tail.

That nothing may be wanting to complete the portrait of Les en Goch, we will add, that he wore around his neck a host of relics suspended from a leathern thong;—that his energetic countenance was without beard or mustache;—and that a long and deep scar crossed his forehead and cheek. He wore a low-crowned slouched hat, was girded with a sash of red worsted, and was shod with immense wooden sabots.

"How it rains! how it rains!" exclaimed Ann Jann. "Why will the master go out in such weather? Ah! Les en Goch, I don't know; but it seems to me that a great change has come over our Ewen of late: not that he is less kind to us, or good to the poor—Heaven forbid! but he is sad, so sad. What can be the cause of it—think you, my husband?"

The old Breton made no reply, but smoked more rapidly than he had before.

"You won't answer me, Les en Goch," continued the old woman; "but I see that you have noticed the same thing. Great Heavens! what a storm! what a storm! do you hear the sea, how it roars?" exclaimed Ann Jann, as she replenished the fire. "Ever since morning the master has been out, and it has rained the live-long day. At least he shall have something to dry him by when he does return."

"The chief is hardy," remarked the old Breton; "when we held the wood he slept on the ground, and it was not always the first volley fired that aroused him. When those cursed soldiers were tracking us over the mountain like a pack of wolves, he was not down-hearted then."

"Why will you always be speaking of that unhappy time, Les en Goch?" said the old woman, reproachfully; "was not our Ewen wounded in that war? were not you also, and were you not both captured and condemned to death?—though, thanks to Heaven! you were both pardoned these two years. I tell you, that during the fifteen months of the Chovan rebellion, I went daily to the church of St. Michael to pray God and the good saints of Brittany for your protection; and when I returned to the castle, I hid my face in my apron and cried bitterly for my foster-son, and for you, Les en Goch."

"For all that, we had a very good time of

it, and the chief never enjoyed himself better than when we were fighting every day. You should have seen how gayly he led the attack."

"Why do you always call him the chief, now that the war is over and done with, through the mercy of God," said Ann Jann, as she proceeded to light a large brass lamp.

The old Breton, pointing to a long musket which was suspended over the fire-place, replied quietly; "Peace or war, a musket is always called a musket."

Then the tempest broke forth with redoubled violence; the lightning flashed incessantly, the rain fell in torrents; peal upon peal of thunder stunned the ear; the mighty ocean lifted up its voice from afar, and the waters of the gulf, beating upon the crags beneath, seemed to shake the castle to its very foundation.

Jesu-Maria, and our lady of Falgoat, defend us!" cried Ann Jann, lifting her hands in prayer; "and grant that our Ewen be not gone down to the shore; the sea must be sweeping over the low-lands."

"He has not gone down to the shore," remarked the phlegmatic old Breton.

"Are you sure of that, Les en Goch?"

Her husband made no answer, but extinguished his pipe and rose from his seat.

Wager, the great wolf-dog, arose with his master.

"Are you going to look for Ewen?" asked the nurse.

The latter made no reply to his wife, but, with his head drooping on his chest, and his arms crossed, he began to stride rapidly back and forth across the kitchen. The dog followed his footsteps with anxiety.

"God help us!" ejaculated the old woman; who, by long experience, had got to comprehend the slightest movement of her silent husband; "you put out your pipe, you are agitated, Les en Goch: my child is in danger!"

"The storm is high, and he is at sea with Mor Nader," replied the Breton, with deep emotion.

"Then, Heaven have pity on him I have nursed as a child!" cried Ann Jann, dropping upon her knees.

Les en Goch took off his hat, and placed it under his arm; then, kneeling beside his wife, he kissed, devoutly, one of the relics suspended around his neck; and with joined hands, and moving, but noiseless lips, poured out his soul in silent prayer.

What is more touching than to behold, at this late day, two ancient servants who retain so much of primitive simplicity, as to unite in prayer for the safety of a master? Les en Goch having made a vow to our Lady of Auray, to induce her to deliver from peril Ewen de Ker Ellio, the young lord de Treff Hartlog, rose from his knees, much comforted; and looking with confidence to a favorable issue, he recommenced his promenade; pausing, occasionally, to listen to the howling of the storm, and to judge whether its fury was moderated.

Time passed wearily on. The storm continued without abatement. The anxiety of the two old Bretons, who loved Ewen as a child, was intensely painful—but it was mute and submissive;—they had committed their loved one to the Lord, in prayer, and they bowed to His will.

As some relief, the old nurse busied herself in preparing, as usual, the evening meal of her foster-child. Drawing near the fire a highly-polished table of black-walnut, she covered it with a napkin, which had been woven during the long winter evenings at Treff Hartlog, and bleached to snowy whiteness beneath the sweet May moon. Upon this she set symmetrically, but mechanically, two massive silver salt-cellars, and other pieces of plate of antique pattern and elaborate workmanship. It may be thought, that the Baron de Ker Ellio was somewhat patriarchal in his tastes; but he found a peculiar pleasure in eating his frugal meal before the kitchen fire, around which he had sported in childhood, and listened with charmed ear to the tales of that indomitable old fellow, the father of Les en Goch; who fought over the battles in which he beat the Blues, and gained the appellation of the "badger." Besides this, while he eat his meal, Ewen was accustomed to arrange the details of his house-keeping with Ann Jann and Les en Goch, which latter performed the duties of groom, gardener, huntsman, and valet de chambre.

Like his father, Tremadeur de L'Escoet Baron de Ker Ellio, Ewen gave audience to his farmers by his fireside;—received their rents, or forgave them, as the case might be; and never refused to do a service or grant a request, which was consistent with justice to himself and others, or in accordance with ancient custom. To that day, the fishermen brought him the best of their haul, for which he ever paid them liberally, notwithstanding the occasional grumbling of his housekeeper, who insisted they were his by right as lord of the manor. After his evening meal, Ewen left the table to his faithful servants; and stretching himself in the old easy-chair, lit his pipe, fixed his eyes upon the fire, and fell into a fit of revery, (for he was a famous dreamer,) which lasted till bed-time. About nine o'clock, he ascended to his chamber, and threw himself upon the bed where his great-grandfather had died—and his grandfather—and his father before him: he slept quietly till morning.

Thus, with the exception of a period of fifteen months, when, at the head of a band of his own retainers, he had taken the field with the Vendéans, who rose for the Duchess de Berry, quietly and smoothly had glided on the life of the lord of Treff Hartlog.

The clock struck eight—the storm continued to rage in all its fury—and Ewen came not.

"Can Mor Nader be right?" muttered the old Breton to himself. "Is it possible that he has second sight?"

"The gift of second sight never comes from the Bon Dieu," remarked Ann Jann.

"We do n't know—we do n't know, wife!" returned the Breton; "but whether his knowledge come from God or the devil, curse him, and his prediction too!"

"Prediction! what prediction?"

"The other evening I was down upon the beach; the sun was setting red, and the weather looked threatening. Seated upon a rock I found Mor Nader, singing that song of his, which begins thus:

'When the sun sets red and the sea rises high,
Seated on my door-sill, thus sing I.'"

"Ah! that is an ill-omened song, and they do say, that whenever Mor Nader is heard to sing it, a great storm is sure to follow," said Ann Jann.

"It was the case that night; for the wind began to blow, and the sea to look black and furious. I said, 'we are going to have a bad night, pilot.' Without making any reply, he directed my attention to the tower of Treff Hartlog, which could be seen above the cliffs. 'Well, what would you, Mor Nader?' I asked; 'that is the castle of the cliff.' The pilot, after a moment's silence, said, 'The wind of the black month carries death upon its wings to the lords of that castle.' Not another word could I obtain from him, and now this alarms me."

"Why now, Les en Goch?"

After a few moments' hesitation, the old Breton said, in a low tone, "What month is this, wife?"

"The black month," the old woman answered heedlessly. She had not followed her husband's train of thought; but the next moment the truth flashed upon her, and she exclaimed, in agony, "My husband, I comprehend you; this is the fatal month!"

The old man's head sunk upon his breast, and he continued his walk.

"Yes, this is the black month," said Ann Jann, with terror; "and Ewen is on the sea in company with Mor Nader. Well may he be called the Snake of the Sea. Wicked and deceitful, the evil-doer is the terror of the whole country-side. The good rector of St. Michaels, the Abbé de Kerouellan, has already threatened to excommunicate him, if he continues to practice his sorceries."

"Ah! what a misfortune that the good abbé has been absent at Paris these three months; for just that time the fit has been upon Ewen. Had M. le Abbé been here, he could have given him the consolation which we were unable to afford."

"Ever since he began to speak to us of that strange picture, Ewen's spirits have been failing. Did you never see that picture in the old baron's time, Les en Goch?"

"Never."

"And yet it must be a very old picture."

The old Breton shook his head with an air of perplexity.

"I'm not so sure," he said, "that there is not some evil influence about that picture."

"Like enough, my husband. Do you not recollect how agitated and alarmed the master was, when we were unable to answer his inquiries respecting it?"

"Yes; I 'm convinced that there is witchcraft about that picture!" exclaimed Les en Goch; "for the other day I went up to the master's chamber, when he was gone, and ——"

"And what, my husband?"

"It seemed to me, that the eyes of that pale face moved and sparkled like diamonds."

"Ah! but this portends some great misfortune. Heavens! how the storm increases! It is all over! it is all over! our child is lost!" screamed the frantic old nurse.

"The Lord grant that Mor Nader has not read the destiny of the chief."

"He has not; the Lord has not so willed," cried the nurse, pointing to the door, and stooping down to listen. "I hear his step; 't is he! he comes! Holy Mother! blessed be thy name, that thou hast not deserted our loved one in his hour of need!" She fell upon her knees; Les en Goch and the dog sprang toward the door; it flew open before they reached it, and Ewen de Ker Ellio stood before them.

CHAPTER III.

THE RETURN.

At first sight, the countenance of Ewen de Ker Ellio was not peculiarly attractive. The thick masses of hair which overhung his forehead, his heavy eyebrows, and his long brown beard, which he had not cut since the out-break in la Vendée, gave him a harsh and severe aspect; which, however, vanished upon further acquaintance, before the sweet smile which was habitual to him.

In his maritime excursions, he was accustomed to wear the loose duck trowsers, and woollen jacket, with hood attached, in use among the Breton sailors: and when he made his appearance in the castle kitchen, notwithstanding the rain his hood was down, and his face ghastly pale; his black locks, saturated with brine, hung down to his shoulders, and his garments were dripping wet. Upon his entrance, he closed the door after him with violence, as if he feared pursuit.

So agitated and alarmed, indeed, did the lord of Treff Hartlog seem, that Les en Goch seized his musket, and approaching him. exclaimed, "Ha! master, what has happened?"

"Blessed Mother!" cried Ann Jann, "what danger threatens you?"

At these words, Ewen in a measure recov-

ered himself. He looked about him for a moment, as if bewildered, and then passed his hand over his brow. Ashamed of so puerile an exhibition of fear, he forced a smile, and addressing Les en Goch, asked, "Who do you think I wanted to keep out from here?"

The old Breton looked upon his master with amazement.

"It was the red monk! he followed me!" added Ewen.

The red monk was the traditional spectre of that vicinity. But, notwithstanding this attempt at pleasantry, it was easy to see that Ewen was disturbed by some mysterious feelings of apprehension.

"Did the red monk strike you?" cried the old Breton; "your trowsers are covered with blood!"

"Holy Mary! are you wounded, my son?" exclaimed the old nurse, endeavoring to throw herself into her master's arms.

For the first time, Ewen repulsed her, almost rudely; and without making any reply, threw himself into a seat before the fire.

"Les en Goch, he is wounded!" faltered Ann Jann, in a troubled voice.

The old Chouan answered not, but keeping his eyes fixed upon his master, examined, with great attention, the spots of blood with which his trowsers were stained.

After a time, he said to his wife, "No; that is not his blood: besides, he walks too strong to have been wounded."

"Blessed be the Lord!" murmured Ann Jann, making the sign of the cross.

Ewen's garments were so soaked with wet, that he shivered for cold.

"Will you not change your clothes?" inquired the nurse, gently.

Ewen apparently did not hear her. She approached and repeated the question, but in vain. At length, placing her hand upon his shoulders lightly, she said,

"My dear lord, you must not remain longer in this wet attire."

After some minutes of sombre silence, Ewen came out of his revery; and, as if to reassure himself, by repeating his thoughts aloud, he said:

"Bah! what folly! What is it to me that November is called the black month, any more than that May is called the bright month? Am I really weak enough to be annoyed by such superstitious fears? Because Mor Nader is a madman, is it any sign that he is a wizard? and have I not just now escaped from the greatest danger which ever threatened me in my life? Nonsense! Come, come, Ann Jann, get my supper ready," cried Ewen, recovering his usual tone and manner; "get supper, and then bring a bottle of the strongest wine in the cellar. You and Les en Goch must help me out with it."

"Glad and proud shall we be to drink your health and happy return, master dear," cried the old Breton; but in a lower tone he added, "to expose yourself thus, is to tempt the Lord."

"And to go to sea with Mor Nader alone, is surely to tempt him doubly," murmured Ann Jann, as she busied herself in preparing the supper.

At the name of the pilot, the brow of Ewen was again overcast, and for some time he sat in sombre silence; but at last, with an effort, he recovered himself, and replied gayly,

"Not so, nurse. The old wizard is just the one to go to sea with, for they say he is married to the storm. But by St. Guenhoe, if he be, Madam Tempest proved herself but a termagant wife to-day, for she buffeted her husband about till she drew the blood."

"Drew blood! master Ewen?"

"Do n't you see it upon my trowsers?"

"Yes, master."

"Well, Les en Goch, thus it was: we were trying to take in our sail, which was too heavy for us; a huge wave struck the boat and threw her on her side; Mor Nader fell against one of the hooks upon the gunnel, and cut open his forehead. Luckily, he bled freely; he was not much hurt."

Although Ewen strove to put on an air of assurance while giving this explanation, he was too little accustomed to deceit to be able entirely to overcome his embarrassment.

"And were you alone with Mor Nader in the boat?" inquired the old Breton.

"Certainly;—why not? What need had Mor Nader and I of help to manage such a cockle-shell?"

"And has Mor Nader returned to the Isle of Sein in all this storm?"

"No, no," said Ewen, with a hesitating air; "no, we ran ashore on the point of Kerer, and Mor Nader has probably gone to seek shelter at the hut of Le Gal, the fisherman."

"Are you sure, master, that Mor Nader is spending the night at Le Gal's hut?" inquired Les en Goch.

"Sure of it? no!" exclaimed Ewen, with impatience; "not sure of it, but I suppose he is. But enough of this; help me off with these clothes, which weigh some hundred pounds or less, and which have been defiled, as I told you, by the touch of the red monk."

Les en Goch was too discreet and too respectful to inquire the cause of his master's alarm, when he entered the castle with such precipitation. Supper was served and finished, after which Ewen retired immediately to his apartment, leaving the two old servants to their meditations.

Les en Goch, buried in thought, smoked his pipe in silence. While Ann Jann, well aware how fruitless would be the attempt to arouse the attention of her husband, took her seat in the chimney nook; and brooded over the painful thought, that her darling foster-child had been exposed to other dangers than those of the seas.

Suddenly, Les en Goch started up, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, seized his gun, which he had replaced over the fire-place, examined the charge, and stepped lightly to the door. With his hand upon the latch, he hesitated, seemed lost in thought for some moments, and then returning to the fire, he replaced his musket and sat down in silence.

Ann Jann had watched her husband's motions with an anxious look; she divined the thoughts and intents of his heart, and breaking silence, she said:

"Les en Goch, you were going to the hut of Le Gal, the fisherman, to seek Mor Nader. Do not think of it, I pray you; if he has attempted evil against our master, the Lord above will punish him."

Without betraying the least surprise that his wife had so accurately read his purpose, the old Breton significantly replied:

"The Lord sometimes makes use of human instruments to execute his vengeance."

"Les en Goch, you will not kill Mor Nader? no; wicked as he is, you must not kill him."

"I don't know about that," replied the Breton, coolly.

Ann Jann ascended the stairs without noise, and listened at her master's door. All was quiet! When she returned, she found her husband on his knees at prayer. She joined him, and silence soon reigned throughout the castle of Treff Hartlog.

CHAPTER IV.

EWEN DE KER ELLIO.

Before we proceed further in this narrative, it may not be amiss to analyze, a little more closely, the singular character of the young lord of Treff Hartlog; reserving for a future period, the account of his miraculous escape from the danger into which he was plunged, by the maniac fury of Mor Nader.

Ewen, the only son of the Baron Ker Ellio, lost his mother while still in the cradle; but her place was supplied with unexampled tenderness and devotion, by Ann Jann, to whose fostering care his days of infancy were intrusted. When the child became a youth, the baron sent for the Abbé de Kerouellan, an old lieutenant of dragoons, who had taken holy orders, and become the curé, or as the Bretons always say, the rector, of the parish of Saint Michael's. To this worthy ecclesiastic was committed the charge of our hero's education.

The abbé, as might be supposed, was no great *savant;* but he was a man of sound sense and great force of character, which was much better. He taught his pupil enough of grammar, to enable him to speak and write correctly; and sufficient arithmetic to keep his accounts with his tenants, and that was all. But if the young baron's library and scientific education was somewhat slighted, his moral and physical faculties were cultivated by the good abbé to their fullest extent; and in this task he persisted until he had developed in his pupil great strength of body and energy of mind; in short, he made him a man loyal and generous, robust and hardy. Sincerely pious, a royalist by instinct, Ewen's principles, religious and political, were those of the ancient Breton noble; his creed might be comprised in two words—God and the King.

The old baron died, and with his blessing, he gave his son the following counsel: To be ever faithful to the church and crown; just and kind to his tenants, and never to make Paris his residence—a place, as he said, where one was sure to lose his all, both here and hereafter.

This advice, Ewen had scrupulously followed. When the revolution of 1830 took place, civil war broke out in the west, and the lord of Treff Hartlog, believing it to be his duty to imitate his father, who had in the days of the Republic, been a chosen chief—at the head of a band of his own tenantry, took the field in the cause of him whom he conceived to be his legitimate sovereign.

While the insurrection continued, Ewen maintained his ground; when it was put down, he was outlawed; a price set upon his head, and he was obliged to flee for safety to the forest, accompanied by his faithful retainer, Les en Goch. For four months they led a wandering life, when an amnesty was proclaimed, in which they were included; and Ewen returned to his estate, with the reputation of a good soldier, and a gallant man, which he had earned by the cool and determined courage he had manifested throughout the war.

He now resumed the quiet and tranquil course of life, which he had pursued before it had been broken in upon by the call to arms; and though, at times, he regretted that his days of wild excitement and chivalric ardor were passed, his warlike spirit gradually subsided, and he became, what is by no means common, in one of his age and endowments, a lover of solitude.

His life passed away like a dream: sometimes, upon the boundless wastes which stretch over the interior of Brittany, sometimes, upon the stupendous cliffs which line her coasts, he watched the mighty workings of nature, as she smiled in the sunshine, or frowned in the storm. Buried in revery, he would plant himself upon a rock, and watch the sun as it set in the ocean. Twilight would succeed the day, and night the twilight, before Ewing, rising from his seat, would return to his castle, gazing with love and admiration upon the starry heaven, and breathing the sweet scent of the fern which lined his path.

Arrived at home, the affectionate attentions of his faithful servants forestalled his every wish. His repast made, Ewen lit his pipe,

and installing himself in his comfortable fauteuil, resumed his revery until the hour for repose arrived.

Sometimes, mounting his horse, he would scour the country for miles around, avoiding the towns of Pont Croix and Kemper, so distasteful to him was their noise and bustle; and seeking in preference, those immense and solitary sand plains, which, left by the sea, remind one of the elements from which they are recovered.

Then again, Ewen would hunt the livelong day, through the tangled brakes and the forests, accompanied by his faithful dogs, surmounting with ease the difficulties and impediments of that wild and broken country, filling his panniers with game, by the steadiness of his aim, and returning at night, fresh and unwearied, to his home.

Idle as this life might seem, his mind was ever active. Essentially poetical in his temperament, Ewen was a poet in all but words. He studied deeply; but it was the book of nature, not the literature of the day.

Residing by choice among his peasantry, upon his own estate, he shunned the society of the dissipated gentry of the neighborhood. Their boisterous mirth annoyed him; their coarse and sensual pleasures were revolting to his taste. Still, such was his reputation for generosity and courage, so mild and courteous were his manners, that his reserve gave no offence; he lived without a foe; and the wild and reckless young nobles, whose society he shunned, were content to avenge themselves for his neglect, by nick-naming him "The Philosopher."

But this state of things could not always last. After a time, solitude itself began to be wearisome to the lord of Treff Hartlog: he yearned for some kindred heart to enjoy with him his tranquil pleasures, and his wild imaginings.

Hitherto, we have said nothing of Ewen's sentiments in regard to the subject of love; for his occasional rencontres with the barefooted wood-nymphs of Brittany, seemed hardly worth while recording; as their impression upon his mind was too transient to give birth to any serious or powerful impression.

His neighbors occasionally asked him, "Are you never going to marry, M. de Ker Ellio?" but his answer invariably was:

"Never: I never intend to marry. I am too independent, too jealous of my liberty ever to surrender it. I never dream of it."

In so saying, however, Ewen did not strictly adhere to the truth: he did dream of marriage; and upon that very dream, he founded the most extravagant and chimerical expectations of future happiness and joy to come. But with such perfection, indeed, did he dress his imaginary bride, that he might well despair of meeting her in the scenes of real life.

The ample fortune, ancient name, and noble character of the young baron, entitled him to ask the hand of the richest and noblest damsel in the province; and his old instructtor, the Abbé Kerouellan, had not unfrequently suggested to him a connection with two of the high-born and wealthy heiresses, whom he met at an occasional fête of the Church, and other gatherings of the magnates of the land; but Ewen had always declined, under the pretence of a love of freedom, and a repugnance to mere silken bonds.

In so doing, however, he did not assign the real reason; nor did his indifference to his fair neighbors, arise from any want of beauty, or accomplishments, on the part of the blooming girls of Brittany. But, for a long time, the young baron occupied himself with completing the portrait of an imaginary fair, who was to make him blest. Day by day, he had added some new charm to the picture; and when, at length, enriched with every treasure, which his heart or imagination could bestow upon it, he pronounced it finished; he cherished it in his heart, and only asked, "Is there such a woman? Why should there not be?"

But when, as was sometimes the case, he persuaded himself that such a being did exist, and that he might fail to call her his own, then it was that his reflections took a turn too painful to be endured. "Unhappy that I am," he would exclaim, "cherishing hopes impossible to be realized—I have unfitted myself for enjoyments which are within my reach. What I crave is beyond the bounds of reasonable expectation. What I am offered, is incapable of satisfying my desires."

With these thoughts commenced the melancholy to which, as we have before observed, Ewen had, within a few months, become a prey. A sweet sadness, almost a weariness of life, was creeping over his soul;—the gay face of nature, the smiling landscape, the song of birds and the sweet breath of flowers, had no longer any charm for him. The mild and troubled ocean, the tempest and the storm, alone filled him with a sort of savage ecstacy. These he would contemplate for hours, from the top of some lofty cliff, and when he returned to his home, the storm still raged within his breast.

The maternal care of Ann Jann, the silent devotion of Les en Goch, in some measure calmed the turbulent emotions; but still urged by a feverish agitation, he would range through the vast uninhabited apartments of the castle, and listen to the wind, as it moaned and wailed through its deserted halls, with wild excitement, before he retired to rest.

It was not long before superstition supervened upon a mind, so well prepared to give a habitation to its terrors.

The whole country was filled with fearful rumors of the prescience of Mor Nader, the pilot of the Seine; and Ewen was smitten with the desire to test the wizard's power. He sought him; and the old man, half-maniac

if nothing more, had poured forth his sinister auguries concerning the fatal influence of the black month upon the destiny of the house of Ker Ellio; and finally, as we have seen, in an excess of savage delirium, had sought, at the risk of his own life, to accomplish his fearful prophecy by the destruction of his victim.

Let us here remark, that Ewen, notwithstanding the change of character which his strange hallucinations had wrought, remained in his moral attributes the same; and that the goodness of his heart and his compassion for the unhappy, seemed actually increased by his own mental sufferings.

One circumstance alone, seemed to render his malady incurable; it was an event which gave a palpable and permanent image to the idol which he worshipped—the dream-girl of his soul.

Works of art were rare in the castle of Treff Hartlog; but in the sleeping chamber of its lord, was an old and half-obliterated picture, which represented a woman of surpassing beauty.

A pale countenance, still more faded by time, some vestiges of a red tunic which had covered the shoulders, a mass of dark-brown hair which fell in long locks over the temples, were all that was visible; the remainder of the figure and apparel had disappeared in the obscurity of the back-ground. The only portions of the portrait which were entirely uninjured, were the forehead and eyes. The brow was lofty and commanding; it seemed to possess at once the hardness and purity of marble. The eyes were large, black, and irresistibly lovely, notwithstanding a bold, and almost wicked expression, which shot forth from their glance. The nose, mouth and chin, were so far faded as to require a considerable stretch of the imagination to define them.

This picture, at the first view, created a startling impression on the beholder. The large and snow-white forehead, and piercing black eyes, seemed to start out from the canvas, leaving the other features of the form wrapped in mystery and gloom. One thing alone remains to be remarked; above the left eyebrow was a small natural mark, of the description known, in common parlance, as beauty spots. Upon the dream-girl which he worshiped, the diseased imagination of Ewen had at once bestowed the features of the mysterious portrait—which at first sight had taken a strong hold of his wayward fancy,—and thenceforth, the first object which he sought in the morning and the last of which he took leave at night, was the magic picture, with its marble brow and jet-black eyes.

In such a state of mind as the lord of Treff Hartlog was, it will readily be conceived, that any inexplicable circumstance connected with this portrait, should seem to him to partake of the supernatural; and, strangely enough, such a circumstance did exist. Whether this picture had always been in his apartment, and he had only now remarked it; or whether it had lately been placed there, Ewen inquired of himself in vain. When it came there, or from whence, he could not tell. He had no recollection of ever having seen it in his father's time; and both his curiosity and his anxiety were augmented, when both Les en Goch and Ann Jann, in answer to his inquiries, disclaimed all knowledge of its existence.

The picture was painted upon wood; and Ewen, after a careful and patient examination, could discover nothing new upon its surface, excepting some nearly obliterated inscription in one corner, of which, after repeated efforts, he could make out only the word, "November." It was not without a thrill of horror, that Ewen read the name of the *black month*. What did it there—the name of that month, which tradition taught him was so fatal to the well-being of his house? He turned toward the rector of St. Michael, as the only one who could probably throw a light upon this mystery;—but the rector was absent in Paris; and during his stay, which lasted for three months, the mental malady of his former pupil had increased with frightful rapidity.

Such was the condition of the young baron at the return of the rector.

CHAPTER V.

THE RECTOR OF ST. MICHAELS.

On the morning of the day after Ewen's escape, M. le Abbé de Kerouellan, rector of the parish of St. Michaels, mounted upon a little white poney, might have been seen climbing the steep and circuitous road which led from the burgh to the castle of Treff Hartlog. The abbé was a stalwart and robust old man, who, in spite of his ecclesiastical robe, had the air and bearing of a soldier, rather than of a priest.

The storm had ceased. A thick and chilling fog had shut down over the horizon, and hid the sea from the view;—though the ear resounded with the hoarse murmurings of the surf, for a heavy ground-swell had succeeded to the wild dashing of the waves.

Bred to arms, the abbé performed, with punctillious exactitude, the important duties imposed upon him by his religious profession, as he had, in former times, those of a soldier—but his language was not always such as became the cloth he wore. Frank, rough, and free-spoken, he sometimes let slip an expression which savored rather strongly of the camp, or the guard-room; but, upon such occasions, he never failed to qualify it, by adding: "*As I should have said, when I was in the army.*" For the rest, the abbé governed his little flock with equal firmness and sagacity, and was both respected and beloved

by them in return. His strong-featured and open countenance, breathed the very spirit of benevolence and cordiality;—his firm and erect seat in the saddle, proved that he was no stranger to the manége; and, as we have before remarked, his every movement betrayed his martial education. Arrived at the outer gate of the castle, the rector sounded the great bell.

The summons was answered by Les en Goch, who bowed reverentially to the abbé, and silently took the bridle of the horse, to lead him to the stable.

"Is Ewen in the castle?" inquired the rector, who ever spoke of his former pupil by this familiar denomination.

"Yes, rector. The chief will be glad, indeed, to welcome you home."

"How has he been since I have been absent?" inquired the rector, who had left St. Michaels for Paris, soon after Ewen's fit of melancholy had commenced.

The old Breton made no answer, but shook his head mournfully.

"So, I shall find him no better than I left him," said the abbé

"Much worse, Monsieur Rector."

"Has he had no company?—have none of his neighbors been to see him?"

"No one, monsieur:—but yesterday, during the tempest, Ann Jann and I were very anxious about him."

"Ah! what was he about, during the tempest?—which, by the way, shook our presbyteries from the cellar to the garret: we have not had such a blow upon the coast these ten years. Well, what was he about? speak up."

"The chief was at sea."

"Heaven guard us! Why, he must have gone mad!" cried the priest, clasping his hands.

"He was at sea with Mor Nader."

The priest's brow grew dark. "What! with that old wretch, about whom so many evil reports are rife? That was wrong, Les en Goch," he exclaimed, "very wrong!"

"Yes! yes, Monsieur Rector, it was indeed wrong; Mor Nader is leagued with the evil one. He is wiser as to what is to come, than a good Christian ought to be."

"And you are more of an ass, than a good Christian ought to be, to believe that old scoundrel's pretensions to fore-knowledge—you are as great a fool as your master; and I am a greater fool than either of you, to stand here and attempt to reason with you: put up my horse, while I go and find Ewen."

"The chief is not up yet, Monsieur le Rector."

"Not up, and past ten o'clock? well, I'll wake him; it 'll not be the first time in his life either. Tell Ann Jann to have some hot cakes ready, for I shall breakfast here this morning."

The Breton bowed respectfully, and led the rector's horse to the stable, while that dignitary made his way up the granite staircase to the apartment of the lord of the castle.

Instead of rapping at the door, the abbé pushed it rudely open, and entered, calling in the tones of an orderly sergeant in the barrack, "Turn out! turn out! sluggards turn out!"

Ewen, half-dressed, was seated upon the side of his bed, contemplating the mysterious portrait; which, that he might see it the better, he had placed before him on a chair. The abrupt entrance of the abbé, aroused him from his revery; he sprang to his feet, and seeing who was his visitor, he stretched out his hand, exclaiming, "Welcome, a thousand welcomes, my dear abbé: is it you, and have you come at last?"

The abbé retreated—"Ho! ho! master dreamer" he replied, "you do not deserve that I should shake hands with you—a fine report I get of you, poor bewildered youth! a pretty looking disciple you are. Ha! do you know that you are on the high road to the madhouse?" Then observing the sad and altered mien, the care-worn expression of the young Breton, he dropped his tone of raillery, and continued, in accents of mingled sorrow and reproach: "Look at him, only look at him—with his hollow cheeks and sunken eyes; his health is failing: it only wanted this, I see it all. The explanation is perfectly simple. The man must needs affect the original, like a savage, a solitary—he is determined to play his game out; and now, when solitude has become insupportable to him, he is resolved to die rather than own it—yes, die! for you are dying of ennui,—a pleasant way of treating those who love you, is it not? So much for living alone!"

"You are right," replied Ewen; "to live alone, is to be miserable."

"Well, and whose fault is it? how often have I told you to marry—marry one of our young and pretty maidens of Brittany, who will fill your heart with joy, and your house with children? But no, monsieur is too proud; monsieur thinks it is beneath him to marry a provincial;—nothing but a giddy, chattering Parisian will do for him! Is it not so?—oh, I admire your taste."

"My dear abbé," began Ewen, in reply, "I assure you that you are mistaken, and—"

"Oh, but that is not all," interrupted the abbé, breaking in upon the discourse of his former pupil without ceremony; "Monsieur le Baron must have his amusements, and what are they, forsooth?. He must put out to sea in a hurricane—and with whom, forsooth? With an infamous old scoundrel, whom all honest people shun as they would a pestilence; and what leads Monsieur le Baron to seek the company of such a wretch? Because, having enfeebled his mind by pondering over dreams and visions, and indulging in wild and extravagant vagaries, he has become weak enough—crazy enough—to believe in witchcraft and diablerie! Very eccentric, very

original all this, to believe in sorcery! Very interesting, to reduce one's self to such a state, that any little piece of nonsense which would not scare a child of four years old, shall startle him, and make him exclaim with faltering tones—'Oh! this is certainly supernatural; human reason cannot account for it, and— But, Heavens! what do I see?" exclaimed the abbé, breaking short his tirade, as he caught a glimpse of the picture which Ewen had placed upon the chair to contemplate; "Heavens!" he repeated, "how came that portrait back here? and is it indeed possible that it is here?"

"What mean you?" cried Ewen, his heart throbbing with deep emotion.

The abbé made no reply; but seizing the portrait, he rushed with it to the window and exposed it to the light.

Ewen, impatient for a solution of the mystery, watched his every motion with the most intense anxiety.

"It's the same," said the abbé, at last, after a long and careful examination; "but do I dream, or do my eyes deceive me? No, 'tis real, 'tis here before me;—yes, there are the almost illegible words, written in red, in the corner, *November*—yes, that is it, 'tis the same. Well, I am perfectly confounded! this is, indeed, incomprehensible; my reason refuses to give credence to my eyes, and yet what I see exists, for it is palpable to the touch: upon my word this actually frightens me!" cried the abbé, as he cast the picture from him in dismay.

There was, indeed, something strange in the contrast, between the commencement and the conclusion of the abbé's harangue;—he had begun by railing at those who believed in the supernatural, and ended by exclaiming as above, "This is incomprehensible—this actually frightens me."

The effect produced upon Ewen, by this exhibition of emotion on the part of a man so sensible, so firm, is more easily imagined than described.

"Tell me, Ewen, I ask you again, how came this picture here, in your chamber?" said the rector.

"That is what I do not know myself, abbé," replied the young baron; "but now, tell me why its appearance here so astonishes you?"

"It may well astonish me, my child; six years ago, your father and I burned that picture to ashes, on that very hearth-stone."

"Do you mean to say, that you saw this picture *burned*, before my father's death?" cried Ewen.

"I repeat, that these eyes saw it burned before your father's death."

"But, abbé, that is an impossibility."

"I do not say no; nevertheless, it is true that I saw it burned to ashes."

"You have been in this chamber twenty times since my father's death, and my impression is, that this picture has always hung between those windows."

"If it is so I have never remarked it, for in that case my astonishment would have been as great as it is now."

"But why was it burned? when was it? and why did I never hear until now of the circumstance?"

"There was no reason that you should know it; you were absent, I think, on a hunting party at Les Neven."

"But why was it burned at all?"

"Your father had requested me to assist him, in a search for some papers relating to a trust which was in the hands of that Jew of a banker, M. Achille Dunoyer."

"Achille Dunoyer! why, that is the name of the banker, with whom my funds are placed, and whom you were to have seen for me while at Paris."

"The same—though I did not see him, but of that hereafter;—let us first dispose of this diabolical picture. While searching for the papers, which your father believed were lost, I had occasion to move a huge chest, behind which, this half-effaced picture had doubtless slipped down years and years before. The moment your father perceived it, he turned pale and exclaimed, 'There is the portrait which I have sought for so much since the death of my father, for the purpose of destroying the last vestige of those features which recall so many fearful recollections. See, abbè,' he continued, 'there ought to be a date in one corner of it—a date always fatal to our house.' He examined, and at length found in one corner, these words: 'November, one thousand seven——' the rest was gone."

"The word 'November' is legible yet, observed Ewen, examining the picture again; "but the figures have been obliterated by the mould and damp. But who was the woman represented here?"

"I know not; only your father, with clenched fist, thus addressed the portrait: 'You were the evil genius of our race long enough; thanks be to Heaven, you have at last vanished from the earth! be it my task to destroy the sole remaining traces of your fiendish lineaments!' So saying, your father tore this panel from the frame, and as there was no fire in the chamber of the tower where he then was, he brought it into this chamber, where he had a basin of coal, and consumed it before my face; and this, I assure you, is strictly true, upon my honor as a man, and upon my faith as a priest."

"And yet," further observed Ewen gravely, "but a moment since, you were chiding me for inclining to believe in the supernatural."

The good rector, too late perceived the mischief he had done, in ministering fresh aliment to his pupil's morbid craving for the supernatural.

"May the devil fly away with you!" he exclaimed,—"*as I should have said when I was in the army*," he added, by way of cor-

rection. "So, this is the improvement you derive from my discourse. You must needs lie in wait, to catch at every word that seems to justify your brain-sick vagaries."

"But indeed, abbé, how do you explain the circumstance, that you see and touch an object, which you, years ago, saw consumed by fire?"

"Well, but what does it all prove?"

"What, abbé! what does it prove?"

"To be sure! 'tis the simplest thing in the world; only look at it in a common-sense point of view, and you will understand it properly. Attend to me now. We will allow, for a moment, that the circumstance is inexplicable; does it follow, that it must therefore be supernatural? By no means; for, see you, to be supernatural, a thing must be impossible; now an impossible thing cannot be, but this thing *is*; therefore, the inference is irresistible, that it is not supernatural, but on the contrary, perfectly natural in every respect."

Logical as this reasoning was, it seemed by no means conclusive to the young baron, who shook his head doubtingly, and passed to another branch of the subject.

"But this epoch, so fatal to our family?—this black month, in which my father and my grandfather died, which is inscribed upon this mysterious picture, and which you yourself said was supposed to exercise a malign influence over the destinies of our family.—what make you of this, abbé?"

"Now he is on another track—now he has got hold of the black month; may the devil burn me in hell!—*as I should have said when I was in the army*,—if he is not getting to be as great a goose as Les en Goch. The black month! why do the leaves fall, and the plants die in November? And is it any more strange that men should do the same?"

"But how comes it that two of my ancesters should die, one after the other, in this sad month, abbé?"

"That is more than I can tell you, I am sworn; but do you mean to infer from that, that the house of Ker Ellio alone have the privilege of dying in the month of November? But enough; I waste my words in talking to you, as I threw away my time when I undertook to give you an education;" cried the unhappy rector, as he paced the floor with rapid strides. "If I had wished to curse his head with such nonsense, I should have given him poetry and romances to read—but no such thing; I taught him only what I knew myself, which was no great things after all. To read, to write, and to speak his native language correctly; the four ground rules of arithmetic; history enough to know that Louis XIII. was the son of Louis XII. and sufficient geography to understand that Pekin was the capital of China;—no Latin, for I know no more myself than enables me to say mass. But when he left my hands he was gay and cheerful, of good heart, and sound sense; as active, hardy, and strong as a mountaineer; as brave and courteous as a gentleman;—but now look at him! Who the devil!—as *I should once have said*,—would believe that this gallant son of the ancient Breton line had become a dreamer—a visionary, as superstitious and timid as the stupid and ignorant peasant of the Leonais? Come, come, Ewen, my dear Ewen; arouse yourself; shake off these foolish fancies; is November any the worse for being called the *black month*? Come, let us go and visit your workmen; you'll find them merry and happy, threshing out their grain upon the barn floor, and singing their country songs. If any have reason to call November the *black month*, my son, it is the poor who lack fuel and fire to keep off its chilling blast; and yet they find means to warm and enjoy themselves without murmuring or complaining. It is a sin against God and the really wretched, to invent imaginary evils. How can you dare to be ungrateful, when the world is full of those who lie down with their children cold and hungry at night, and rise up to toil in the morning, and yet bless the Lord for the small returns they get for their labor and for their continuance in life, wretched as it seems."

This simple but touching appeal, went to the heart of Ewen. He grasped the hand of the Abbé de Kerouellan, and exclaimed, "You are right! my friend, my best friend! but my mind is weakened. I sometimes lose myself. I am the prey of a secret longing, a craving after something imposible to be obtained, and this is killing me."

"And that is killing you, my dear son? Ah! you must go back to the good book, and read the story of the tree of good and evil. It is a case precisely the parable of your own. And you have been diging about the roots of this tree, like a badger in his hole, and you have found nothing but what was bitter to the taste and hurtful to the stomach. Instead of doing bravely the work which God has set before you, like a good Christian and a good master, you have given yourself up to dreams and reveries, and wasted your time in vain imaginings and fatal sophistries."

"Ah! do I not know this? but how can I control my thoughts? how could I foresee that my mind, once so clear and bright, would become overclouded with the blackness of night? Nothing is more limpid and tranquil than the river Helle near its source; nothing more turbid and boisterous than the same stream, when it meets the ocean. Once, solitude was delightful to me; the charm increased, but as it did so, I began to long for some one to share its sweetness with me. I regretted that I had not a wife, in whose loved company I could enjoy this life of enchantment, and who would enjoy it with me."

"A marvellous discovery, truly. Have I not an hundred times and more, counselled you to marry? You have never lacked the opportunity to gratify yourself in that way."

"True, good father; but listen. I have lived so long in the ideal world, that I have created for myself an imaginary bride, whom I love to distraction: her counterpart on earth I cannot hope to find."

"Now Heaven have mercy on you, my poor unhappy Ewen! What ever put such fantastic nonsense into your poor brain? An ideal wife! a thing of air. Morbleu! there is but one way to cure this;—marry one of our brave Breton girls off-hand. Yvonne de Kergalec, for example, or Marie Jeane de Tremadek. You know them both; you have seen them at the fête of Falgoat. Take one of these, a substantial, rosy, bouncing girl of eighteen, with good spirits and a handsome fortune—as fair and bright as the yellow gold, and as sweet as the sunny peach; marry her, and love her, and she will bring you a brace of fine boys, who will scamper about your grounds like a couple of wild goats; drive away the blues, and make every month seem like May. Come, Ewen, let us get breakfast, and I will ride over at once to the castle of Kergalec, or to that of Tremadek, if you choose, and propose for you at once. There will be no objection made, and in six weeks we will dance at your wedding."

"No, no, my friend, I can love none but my dream-girl; and, wo betide me! if she is in existence, she must be the double of this portrait." So saying, the young baron pointed with a melancholy air at the mysterious picture, and relapsed into his revery.

The good rector could no longer restrain his vexation and impatience; he gave the chair a furious kick, which sent it and the picture back upon the floor; and then stamping upon the latter with his heavy boot, he cried, "To hell with you! you cursed phantasm! will you drive that poor foolish boy stark mad? Was it not enough that you were the evil genie of his ancestor?"

"Abbé, for Heaven's sake, spare the picture!" cried Ewen; "take off your foot!"

"Damn it! damn it! damn it!" reiterated the abbé, digging his strong steel spur into the panel, which luckily had fallen on its face.

"Abbé!" cried Ewen, beside himself with rage, "abbé, stop! or——" and he made a gesture of menace.

"Or what!" exclaimed the abbé, drawing himself up to his full height, and regarding the young man with an air, at first stern, and then sorrowful. "Ah! Ewen! Ewen!" he added in a broken voice.

"Pardon me! pardon me!" cried Ewen, at his intemperance; "I love you, I reverence you as a father, but in mercy spare that picture!"

The rector withdrew his foot from the picture, which Ewen took up and placed upon the mantel-piece;—when he turned around, the rector was leaving the chamber.

"Where are you going?" exclaimed the young baron, overtaking him.

"Ewen, you have threatened me!" replied the rector, disengaging himself from his pupil, and making another step toward the door.

The young man remained silent for a moment, but still clung to the abbé; and at length he addressed him in a tone so solemn and mournful, that the old man was touched to the soul.

"My friend," said he, "you deny the existence of such things; and yet, look upon that picture, which but just now you acknowledged had an inexplicable, almost a supernatural mystery attached to it. The woman it represents has been the evil genie of my family. She it was who caused me to menace you. You, my early instructor, my best friend, the pious minister who closed the eyes of my father—tell me, tell me! is there not a fatal mystery in this?"

Struck, in spite of himself, with this strange recapitulation of facts, the abbé was for the moment embarrassed for an answer. Ewen continued:

"Attribute my conduct, father, I conjure you, to this mysterious influence, and not to any want of affection or respect for you. Pardon me, I am mortified; and deeply regret that I should have been betrayed into so unworthy an act."

"It needed not this to induce me to forgive you, my dear child," replied the abbé, clasping Ewen in his arms. "God be thanked, however, that it needs something more than this old panel, which I thought I once saw burned, to turn my head. But give me your hand, Ewen, we'll say no more about it. Lo! what is this? you tremble, your skin is hot; you have a fever!"

"I passed a wretched night."

"Yes; and yesterday you went to sea in the storm, with Mor Nader. Damn that old rascal! he seems to forget that, in my capacity as shepherd of this flock, I hold the rod as well as the staff; but I'll quicken his memory with it, or enforce my counsel with this good oak sapling. The Bon Dieu must allow me this slight exercise of my temporal authority, while I give the rogue the soundest thrashing that he can bear and live. *Thus*, I'll tell him, *that is what I would have given you when I was a soldier*. It will be a mercy to him, too, if it serves as the means of keeping him out of prison or out of the galleys.'

"Mor Nader is not what you think."

"He is a villainous impostor, who would fain play the soothsayer; and if he persists, I'll recommend him to the notice of the public prosecutor one of these pleasant mornings; and we'll soon see, if M. Mor Nader will keep my parish in an uproar any longer."

"My dear friend, listen to me. If this man is an impostor, he deceives himself; he may be a monomaniac, may be wholly mad if you will, but he is not wilfully a deceiver. He puts forth his predictions, without fee or

reward; and however you may account for it, they almost always are fulfilled to the letter."

"Bah! bah! he asks no payment in advance, and in that he shows himself a shrewd and far-reaching swindler. He offers his services gratuitously, as a bait to his victims; but in time he will make them pay dearly enough—and as to the fact that some of his predictions are fulfilled, that proves nothing more, than in playing pitch and toss, the coppers sometimes turn up heads."

"My friend," replied Ewen, after a moment's silence, "I ought, perhaps, to make you acquainted with the events of the last evening which I passed with him upon the sea;—I will do so." And the baron proceeded to relate the occurrences of the night before, as we have already given them. He added, that when the boat sank, the sudden shock, and chill of the water, had brought him to himself; and that, aided by the tide which was setting in, and the wind which was blowing on shore, he succeeded in reaching the land, which was not so distant as he had supposed. Then, half-bewildered by the extraordinary and appalling nature of his adventure, and the strange exhibition of inspired madness to which he had been a witness, and of which he had nearly been the victim, he had made his way to the castle.

The abbé listened to his recital, with a mixture of indignation and alarm; and when he had concluded, broke out into new reproaches and threats.

"This shows," he exclaimed, "exactly as I expected—that the wretch was stupid and ferocious enough to be willing to lose his own life, so that he might destroy you; and be regarded by the people, after his death, as a great soothsayer. There are not wanting martyrs in bad causes as well as in good ones; and as you admit that you had called him an impostor, I do not wonder that he undertook to revenge himself at the risk of his life;—though it is by no means certain that he was not aware of his vicinity to land, and certain of his escape. But I'll leave you to draw your own inferences from this occurrence, and doubt not you will see how inexcusable was your folly, in intrusting your life to the mercy of such an ill-conditioned brute. Enough of this: let us pass to another subject of real importance, and one well worthy of your serious attention. Do you know, my dear Ewen, that you are in danger of being half ruined?"

"Half ruined! what do you mean?"

"That deposit, which your father made at the banking-house of M. Achille Dunoyer; do you know that I think that it is in jeopardy? It comprises no small part of your fortune, and I cannot believe its loss would be indifferent to you."

"But what danger threatens this deposit?"

"A very great one, I fear. M. Dunoyer did not pay me the fourth part of the sum which you drew for, and which I was to get for you."

"They say, however, that M. Dunoyer is very rich."

"They say a good many other things, besides, which are not to be relied upon; but this much is a fact;—when I called at his house with your draft, I was informed that he had gone a journey; that it was uncertain when he would return, and that he had left no provision for the payment of the amount. Now, as the sum called for was but fifty thousand francs—only a quarter of what you had in his hands, and a mere bagatelle to a man of M. Dunoyer's supposed wealth—there seemed to me something very suspicious in this excuse, and I hastened to inform you of it."

"It is somewhat singular, indeed."

"Your notary at Kemper agrees with me in opinion, that you ought to go to Paris at once, and attend to the matter."

"Can I not just as well give my Kemper notary the requisite power of attorney, and let him go?"

"By no means: for if it should turn out that this Dunoyer is in peculiar circumstances, it may be necessary to take some prompt steps, or enter into some arrangement to which your personal consent will be necessary, and about which you ought to exercise your own discretion."

"How very annoying and disagreeable!" exclaimed Ewen; "and then, to be obliged to stay in Paris for any definite period, I can never endure it. I know no one there."

"Why, there is your cousin, the Count Edward de Montal, to whom you gave me a letter."

"I never have seen him but two or three times in my life, and that was some four years ago, when he came to pass a month at Kemper, at the house of the Chevalier Le Molien."

"But he will certainly receive you as courteously as he did me, and introduce you to society, to do which he seems well adapted: for he is very fashionable, and if not wealthy, apparently in easy circumstances."

"I suspect he has little or nothing left from his patrimony."

"So you told me before. But, Ewen, if this be so, he must have found the philosopher's stone, for he seemed to live *en prince;* and he desired me to say to you, with great cordiality, that if you came to Paris, he was entirely at your service."

"I'm very much obliged to him."

"To be sure you are. Still, if I did not know you as well as I do, I should not exactly fancy him as your mentor; for during my visit to him, there came in a terrible good-for-nothing personage—a sort of *mauvais suget* of this age and the last. One Marquis Beauregard, (yes, that's the name, *Beauregard*, keep it in mind,) a shrewd fellow, indeed, and a bold profligate; though to do him justice, he was civil enough to me when he knew who

I was. Your cousin, I imagine, does not often entertain men of my cloth, and the marquis's credulity shows that he was well brought up. You may imagine, I did not trouble them with my company long; but short as my stay was, I saw another very questionable sort of a body enter, dancing and singing: a damsel, whom your cousin called Julie."

"Who was she?"

"I found out subsequently, by looking at the journals, that Mademoiselle Julie was one of the most famous actresses of the day; and you may be assured, that the Abbe de Kerouellan felt no disposition to be housed in the same cage with such a bird of passage. For you, my dear Ewen, I think you should call upon your cousin, in spite of the dissipated marquis, and flirting actress. Your principles are proof against their fascinations, and these gentlemen are men of the world, who can introduce you into society, and possibly give you some good advice as to your business with Dunoyer. So go to Paris at once, my son, as much for your pecuniary interest, as for the restoration of your health and spirits. Amid the bustle and excitement of the city, you will soon shake off the blues; recover your equanimity, and in a few months come back, well, hearty, and ready to take to your arms some nice country belle, whom I'll look up for you in the mean time."

"I don't know but you are right," returned Ewen; "I do believe that my imagination is diseased, and that my mind, affected by solitude, and by some odd, and out of the way occurrences, has acquired a false appetite for the supernatural, which threatens its health and soundness. The change of scene, the distractions of Paris, and the necessity of attending to my pecuniary concerns, will dispel these weak and gloomy imaginings. Yes, my old friend, you have taught me to hope; and I trust I shall return cured of all my ailments, and ready to marry one of your fair parishoners."

"Come to my arms, my darling boy!" exclaimed the good abbe; "you make my heart beat with joy, as it has not done for many a day. Go to-morrow; indeed I would say, go to-day, if you were ready. Your notary at Kemper, told me he was in funds on your account, to the extent of twenty thousand francs, which is twice as much as you will want in Paris. And if you can settle your business favorably with that M. Dunoyer, (of whom by the way I've no great opinion,) the money will be well spent. And now, as to this mysterious portrait," continued the abbé, taking up the picture, "we will burn it this time, and no mistake. Luckily, there is a brazier at hand, as if for the very purpose."

"No! no! my friend," returned Ewen, "I particularly want to keep that portrait. Hereafter," he added, looking at it, "I shall laugh at my weakness."

"Hum! hum! I should rather make an end of the cursed thing at once, if I had my way," said the abbé, reluctantly putting the picture down.

"Now abbé," cried Ewen, with a laugh, "you must take care, or I shall begin to think you are afraid of it yourself."

"By all the devils in hell!—*as I should have said when I was in the army*—if you think so, I'll take it home and hang it up in my presbytery."

"No, no; leave it here till my wedding day; and then, if you like, we will make a grand *auto da fe* of it."

"Very well, I trust that day is not far off."

After this interview, convinced of the necessity of a change of scene, and confident of its good effects, Ewen became more calm and self-possessed, than he had been for months.

To strengthen himself in his good resolution, Ewen begged the abbé to spend the day, and the ensuing night, at the castle. The abbé was too anxious to see his advice promptly followed, not to consent: the day was spent in making preparations, much to the satisfaction of all but the two old servants; one of whom, Ann Jann, frequently wiped her eyes, as she thought of the perils her foster child was about to undergo in Paris, which she considered but another name for hell. Les en Goch, who was less disturbed, manifested his dissatisfaction by smoking with redoubled intensity, though in perfect silence, from morning till night;—even the chief, himself, could get nothing but monosyllables from his sturdy retainer.

Ewen, at one time, had thought of taking him with him; but this the priest discouraged, remarking that he would be more trouble than benefit; and adverting to the impossibility of inducing the old Breton to discard his national costume, and assume that of an *autrou* or monsieur, as he called it.

The next morning, a pair of horses were put to the old post-chaise, which had lasted the family of Ker Ellio for two generations; and, Ewen, with one of his retainers behind, drove to the post-town of Point Croix, accompanied on horseback by the abbé, who wished to take a last farewell, and see his old pupil safe *en route*.

Vain would be the attempt to paint the distress of the old servants, when the carriage, which drove their master, disappeared in the dust which it raised. Not only did they dread his exposure to the perils of Paris; but what the more especially struck terror to their hearts, he had left his home on Friday of the *black month!* When the noise of his carriage-wheels died away in the distance, the faithful couple betook themselves to their lonely fireside;—the one to weep, and the other to smoke in silence till nightfall.

CHAPTER VI.

M. DE MONTAL.

We will now ask the reader to leave the coast of Brittany, and follow us to a small suite of rooms, in the entre sol of a house on the Italian boulevard.

These lodgings, which were at present in the occupancy of Count Edward de Montal, had, if the expression be allowable, a physiognomy peculiar to themselves; or, to explain our meaning more definitely, we will say, that at first sight one would be struck with the luxury and elegance with which they were furnished—while, upon a closer examination, he would be still more surprised to see how entirely this was the effect of imagination, and how totally every substantial comfort had been sacrificed to appearances.

The paper-hangings of cheap material, were thought to resemble the rich and massy folds of the antique damask;—vases, of ordinary china, gaudily painted and mounted in brass, represented the exquisitely penciled Sevres, adorned with chased work and ormolu. There was a cabinet of oak, stained dark, with gothic panels and fretted mouldings, intended as an imitation of one of those ancient and invaluable structures of ebony, covered with Arabesque carved work, of children, and birds, and vines, and flowers. The exquisite embellishments of coral and mother-of-pearl, and incrustations of metals, engraved by the hands of Nanteuil or Adran, which are lavished upon the furniture of Boule, were but feebly shadowed forth by rough castings in brass, applied without stint and without taste. There were boxes of gilt metal, enriched by false stones; and, upon a frame, ostentatiously displayed, some specimens of the enamel work of Limoges, which seemed but to put one in mind of those collections of Florentine bas-reliefs upon boxes of ebony and ivory, interspersed with minute figures of silver, which have upon their sockets of stone the name of Germain Pilon;—or, of those statuettes of gold, enamelled in the Byzantine style, with purple and azure;—or, of those charming snuff-boxes, upon which the marvellous miniatures of Petitot lay half-hidden in a foliage of emeralds, and garlands of fine pearls and rubies. So it was with the pictures. In broad and gaudy frames, coarse and ill-drawn copies in flaming colors, thickly plastered over with varnish, represented the inimitable masterpieces of Wouvermans, and Teniers, and Van Ostrade.

If it should be thought, that we have dwelt too strongly upon the distinction between true luxury and false; or, that we have subjected the theatrical decoration with which M. de Montal thought it proper to adorn his apartments, to too severe a criticism; we can only reply, that we have seized upon this point tenaciously, as exhibiting one of the most—if not entirely the most—striking characteristics of that gentleman's mind—a regard for appearances, beyond all things else. And this characteristic will be more largely illustrated hereafter.

Far be it from us to sneer at the humble abodes, to which misfortune obliges those of fallen estate to resort. We can respect the manifestation of an attachment to the luxuries of better days, where it is indulged in even at the expense of severe taste. Most people who adorn their simple apartments in such a manner, know some hidden source of enjoyment, which makes their homes peculiarly serene to them; or are gifted with some eminent qualities, which especially qualify them to relish a retired life. Such people we respect—but to neither of these classes did M. de Montal belong. He had embellished his home to the extent of his means; but nothing was more insupportable to him, than a day passed within its walls.

And thus it is with many. To one who spends his time abroad habitually, amid the noise and excitement of the external world—especially if he be immersed in its sins and its follies—his own house is as silent and solitary as a desert. It is a Pandemonium, where every night are renewed the troubles of the day;—the mortifications, the pangs of jealousy;—the torments of unrequited love, are all renewed. Actors abroad, it is not until they reach their homes that they experience, to their fullest extent, the torments which, before the eyes of the world, they have striven to endure and conceal under a smiling exterior.

A man of this character was M. de Montal. He usually brought home with him a wounded, jealous, and envious spirit; and, when left to himself, he was forced to contemplate the false and precarious position which he was sustaining in society. About thirty years of age, this gentleman traced his origin to an old and ennobled family of Brittany; his great-grandfather was the uncle of Ewen de Ker Ellio's father. After having held, under the Empire and the Restoration, several important posts in the administration of the government, the father of M. de Montal died, leaving to his son an income of some five-and-twenty thousand francs. This moderate but respectable fortune the young count had, in the course of five or six years, squandered in play and good cheer, upon opera girls and promiscuous debauchery. His overweening vanity was his destruction;—nothing less would satisfy him, than to vie with the most wealthy and extravagant of his cotemporaries.

What is more frightful, and at the same time more common, than that reckless spirit which impels a man to pursue such a course—though conscious of imminent danger, certain of ultimate ruin, and fully aware that the only alternative before him is beggary or suicide?

M. de Montal, with nothing of talent or originality to redeem him, was a mere vulgar profligate; and, as is the custom with people of that description, when his resources failed him, instead of endeavoring to recruit them, he only strove to hide his necessities, and deceive the world as to his actual situation.

No one, but he who has experienced it, knows to how much misery, disappointment, mortification and chagrin, one exposes himself, when he enters upon the task of concealing his poverty from the companions of his better days;—and what is strange, he is the only one who does not perceive, with what gusto the selfish world he would fain deceive, enjoys the sacrifice of self-respect, of honor, of happiness always, and sometimes of life, which he makes at its shrine. M. de Montal had witnessed, nay, had been, one of the foremost to exhibit that haughty disdain, with which the beau monde greets those who have ruined themselves, to glitter for a brief period before its eyes; and as his own turn approached, numberless were the slights and subterfuges he made use of, to avoid his share of the poisoned chalice that he had commended to the lips of others. As an excuse for selling his horses, parting with his mistress, and quitting his magnificent apartments, he announced that he was about to travel in Italy, and that hereafter he wished to live more alone, so that a smaller establishment would be better suited to his inclination. His splendid furniture he said he had become tired of; it no longer suited his taste; he must have something more recherché. Having thus satisfactorily, as he supposed, accounted for his movements, he disposed of the wreck of his fortune, and realized a sum of some thirty thousand francs. With that he might have lived moderately and comfortably in some retired part of France; but, instead of adopting a course so wise and judicious, M. de Montal bought a travelling carriage, hired a valet in livery, and departed in state for Italy, which he had so pompously announced as his destination.

At Lyons he stopped, took the route to Avignon, and for three months resided in a little village in the vicinity of the latter city. After this, he suddenly appeared in Paris; and to those who asked him about his adventures in Italy, he replied, with an air of mystery, that a romantic love affair, in which he became involved when at Lyons, had made a great change in his plans; that he could not, from prudence, enter into particulars; but that one consequence of his intrigue was his immediate return to Paris, whence he was obliged to hold himself ready to depart at a moment's warning; and hence he had taken the very humble apartments which we have already described to the reader.

As usual, these elaborated lies deceived no one; for the world has a wonderful faculty in discovering poverty, under all the flaunting disguise beneath which it seeks to hide its wretchedness and rags.

Still, M. de Montal felt confident that he had satisfactorily accounted for his change of position. He still had left some twenty thousand francs, and with this he proposed to live for five or six years; hoping, by means of the most painful sacrifice of comfort and convenience, to keep up *appearances*—with him—the most important thing in life.

Another trait of ill-omen, distinguished the character of M. de Montal. It was a sort of ill-founded confidence in fate; which he felt certain could never permit a man of fashion and accomplishments, to become the victim of those bitter and humiliating misfortunes which leave one no alternative but the pistol or the Seine. A certain degree of this sort of faith, every one doubtless possesses: it grows out of that passion of hope, which is, for wise purposes, implanted in every human heart—a passion which is at once the source of confidence and courage to the prudent and energetic, but only the more enervates the weak and indolent, and indisposes them to exertion.

When chance seems, even momentarily, to encourage this feeling, it is indeed extraordinary, to what foolish and extravagant notions it gives birth; and we shall soon see how one or two lucky events strengthened M. de Montal in his delusion, until he became so entirely reckless of the future, that, reduced as his fortune was, he commenced a life, as wild and fantastic, as was ever led by man.

A seat, instead of a box, at the opera, the entrée of a club, an apartment furnished with some approach to fashion, a valet de chambre—such are the necessary appointments of the poor gentleman, and indispensable to him as food, raiment, and lodgings are to the poor devil upon town, to whom he is rapidly assimilating. For five or six thousand francs per annum, one can keep up this semblance of luxury and fashion. Such things will enable one to keep his place in good society; and it must be acknowledged, that to most men in reduced circumstances, it is some satisfaction to enjoy that privilege at so cheap a rate.

To M. de Montal, however, this consideration was of little value. It only the more excited his envy and other base and uncomfortable emotions, to be so constantly brought in contact with those as rich as, or richer, than he ever had been—and this, especially, when the thought haunted him, which haunts all vain men, that they are the objects of universal observation, and that every one is aware of their neglected opportunities, and misspent fortunes. Goaded by such feelings, the count's desire to regain his fortune was incessant, and tormented him night and day; and this, not so much for the sake of enjoying it, as to outvie those who now were rejoicing over his downfall.

One day, he bought a ticket in one of the Frankfort lotteries, which cost him a louis; it drew three hundred. This he considered a special interposition of Providence; which watched over him, and promised him a prosperous future. But M. de Montal's chief hope, and his main dependence for hereafter, was upon some rich widow, or wealthy heiress, whom he expected was to be especially provided, and so situated, that she must instantly fall into his toils. To contribute his part toward, this desirable conclusion, he thought it incumbent upon him to exhibit himself nightly at the opera; and the money expended in this way, he considered as so much capital invested, and which was to yield him a golden return.

Eighteen months passed away, and neither maids nor widows appeared, to play their appointed parts for his benefit. Still, M. de Montal's confidence in his lucky star was unshaken: two new circumstances had occurred, which, notwithstanding they had no bearing upon his matrimonial projects, still kept up his courage and sustained his hopes.

One of his college-mates, a lawyer of no great parts, but of ridiculous pretensions, became a deputy; and then, by some strange freak of fortune, or rather, of party—a minister. His name was M. de Roupi Gobillon. Anxious to exhibit himself in his new position, and decorated with his new honors, to his old school-mate—who had hitherto avoided him, as he would a pestilence; and desirous, also, to have it appear that he had had some respectable acquaintances before his elevation; M. de Roupi Gobillon made all sorts of advances to M. de Montal, in the hope of overcoming his reserve.

These advances the count was not backward in acknowledging, and his adroitness in accounting for his former disdain, was admirable. "If I have appeared cool and distrustful heretofore; my dear sir," he said, "it is because, powerful and influential as you have ever been; first as a great lawyer, then as a leading deputy, and now as a minister of state, I thought the first advance should have come from you. Good taste requires, that great men, when they condescend to bestow their friendship upon people of independent fortune, who are satisfied to occupy a middle station in good society, should appear to court rather than be courted."

M. Roupi de Gobillon, delighted with this court flattery, swallowed it at once, without waiting to suspect the motive which prompted it; and in return contrived a little surprise, which he thought would delight his friend, with whose straightened circumstances he was well acquainted, notwithstanding the pains he took to conceal them; he offered him the inspectorship of tobacco. This M. de Montal refused, with a great show of spirit and independence, telling the minister openly that he wanted no office; but he did not less fail to turn the offer (which he greatly magnified,) to his account, and found upon it the credit of one, who stood well with the government, and could command any appointment within its gift. To this reputation he added by his acquaintance with some of M. Gobillon's colleagues in office, whom he occasionally met at his house; and who, finding him upon a good footing, without much inquiry admitted a man of his fine exterior, and polished address, into their political circle.

These connections, together with his club and opera—all exhibited as the count de Montal knew how to exhibit them—gained him some eclat, and went far to reinstate him in the position which he was so rapidly losing in society. True, his advantages resulting from his political relations, were of a negative character in the general acceptation of the term; but they afforded the count what he valued far more than the substance—they gave him the *appearance* of being a man of influence with the government; and had already procured him the gratification of having some richer and more fashionable men than himself, say, with an air of envy, "What a fortunate fellow you are! first you draw a prize in the lottery, and now you are hand and glove with the ministry!"

"Yes, I may flatter myself that I am in their confidence," the count would reply; "but it is a great bore."

"Oh, you are a strange fellow—you always care for nothing—give yourself no trouble, but you always light upon your feet, let what will happen; see what it is to be shrewd and knowing."

But if the elevation of M. de Gobillon enabled the count to acquire the reputation of being a man of address and influence, his success, in another quarter, afforded a still more gratifying nutriment to his vanity.

A young and pretty actress, Mademoiselle Julie Dubreuil, made her debût at the Comedie Francaise, and created a great sensation—her beauty, grace and talent, became at once the theme of conversation in every fashionable circle. She was the centre of attraction for many of the leaders of the ton, but their vows and protestations were unheeded—a banker of enormous wealth was unsuccessful in his addresses, and a foreign prince, who dazzled all eyes with his magnificence, was presumptously refused by this paragon of virtue.

Her indomitable reserve drove half Paris mad, and carried at once Mademoiselle Julie to the height of celebrity. At this time it was, that M. de Montal, who for a year or two had been patiently awaiting until his lucky star should send him along some rich maid or widow—he did not care which—thought that he would amuse himself, in the meanwhile, by attempting the fortress of Julie's virtue He consequently procured an introduction to her.

Among all the would-be lovers of the pret-

ty actress, some of whom hoped to win her by their own personal attractions and graces, and others, who relied upon the power of wealth, there were none who even affected to take any interest in her theatrical affairs; and not a few accompanied their addresses by an entreaty or a demand, for the dismissal of a sort of old aunt of Julie's, called Madame Savageot, who was a creature of insufferable temper, played the duenna to her niece, and yet possessed unbounded influence over her.

Far different was the conduct of M. de Montal, who was obliged to make up by address, for the want of wealth or of great personal advantages. Admonished by the fate of his predecessors, he opened his battery in a new quarter, and applied himself first to overcome the redoubtable aunt Savageot. He spared no pains, and shrunk from no sacrifice of pride or convenience, to soften the heart of this ill-conditioned old woman. He succeeded, by degrees, in procuring himself to be considered as one of the family, by manifesting the warmest interest in Julie's professional concerns; he entered into all the feelings of jealousy, rivalry and pique, which filled the heart of the actress, who was, or fancied herself, surrounded by envious and inimical opponents; he took part, and materially aided, in all the intrigues which she set on foot, to sustain herself or put down her rivals. He supported her cause, both before and behind the curtain. He managed to conciliate some of the journalists, quiet others who were in the opposition, and hounded others on against the enemies of his fair protegè; and eventually concluded, by making himself indispensable to her as a counsel and a support.

Savage and cunning as she was, Madame Savageot could not resist the art and pliability of M. de Montal; he gave her so many proofs of his respect and attachment, and applied himself so assiduously to the business arrangements of her niece, that she called him alternately, *my son*, and my little *lawyer;* the last epithet being intended as a touching compliment to his talent for intrigue.

At length M. de Montal's care, devotion and self-denial, met with its reward. Esteemed by the aunt, he was beloved by the fair Julie.

This brilliant success, which at once raised M. de Montal high in the hierarchy of fashion, and excited the envy of his compeers, did not add to his pecuniary expenses, for the attachment of the actress was of the most disinterested nature; during two years of their intercourse he spent but ten thousand francs.

M. de Montal did not love Julie; he could not. Her native vulgarity of speech and manner, annoyed him one day; her imperious and humiliating exactions, on another; but part with her he could not, for he was poor and she was his luxury—the only thing he possessed which made him an object of envy to those whom he envied. She was the most important of all those *appearances* which he valued beyond his life or his soul; and rather than lose her, torment though she was, he would have submitted to any secret humiliation, or have committed any baseness in private.

Nor were his mortifications altogether of a private nature. There was attached to the theatre a veteran actor, Ducanson by name, who was the head of the party behind the curtain which was opposed to Julie. This man, cynical, caustic and impertinent, was too old and decrepit to fight, but he never let pass an opportunity to affront the young lady, even in presence of the count; who often accompanied her to the play, since he had become, as Madame Savageot said, at once her brother and her lover.

These affronts annoyed the count more on on his own account than on that of the lady; and he was obliged to submit to them, as the old actor could not be called to account.

Time rolled on; but the lucky star of the count brought no rich widows or heiresses. He had continued his visits at the opera since as well as before, his *liason* with Mademoiselle Julie. He had seen, one after another, all the widows and heiresses in Paris, but no one appeared to remark him. Mademoiselle had caused him no expense; but, upon an examination of his finances, he found that he had about enough to live upon for eighteen months longer; after which time, without a miracle, he would be reduced to absolute want, and glad enough to accept the humblest place from his friend, Gobillon;—if, indeed, that friend retained the power to give him one. M. de Montal, in fine, began to doubt the partiality of Providence, as the day of disaster and distress seemed to approach, with steady and unrelenting step; when a sudden thought struck him which revived his hopes, and caused him to cry aloud—

"What a fool I am! Providence, my kind Providence has thrown at my feet, if not an inexhaustible treasure, at least the means of living happily and comfortably, without exertion for the rest of my days; and I have been blind enough to overlook it till the present moment. Julie has more than a hundred thousand crowns, well invested in the funds; besides which, her professional receipts are fifty thousand francs per annum. Why the devil should I not marry her? It must be done. Am I too proud? then I deserve to die of hunger. Why, I have all the trouble of the marriage state now, and that without any of its positive advantages. I do not love Julie, and yet I endure her for *appearance* sake. If I marry her it will be going a step further, and I shall be still more strongly bound to her; but it will be for something worth having; besides, let me once get possession of her money and we'll see——. Yes: Julie has a hundred thousand crowns in the funds, and earns an income of fifty thousand francs per annum;

we can live well enough upon that. To be sure, we cannot expect to be received into society, but we will have our house full of articles, which will be much more amusing. The world! the world will condemn me! But," he continued, shrugging up his shoulders, "what the devil will the world do for me, when I am reduced to my last sous, in attempting to keep well with it? what advantages can it offer me, which will compare with those which will result from this marriage with Julie? Parbleu! to reject this means of recruiting my almost exhausted finances would, indeed, be to relinquish the substance for the shadow."

This was, indeed, a marvellous depression of the ambitious aspirations of M. de Montal; the difference between a wealthy widow, or a rich heiress in fashionable life and Mademoiselle Julie, was enormous; but the count was afraid to tempt his kind Providence too far; and for fear of incurring its displeasure, he determined upon taking what it offered at once, as being the course most consistent with prudence and good taste. Still, there was something very revolting to the count's pride and vanity, in the idea of forming such an alliance. Julie was as handsome as an angel; she was neat, orderly, and economical; very regular in her conduct, and possessed of uncommon talent in her profession. But, on the other hand, she was whimsical, exacting, and essentially vulgar in the structure of mind; she had no elevation of character or sentiment, and her intellectual faculties were wholly uncultivated. On the stage, her manner was exquisitely elegant, even *distingué*, and her voice was of enchanting sweetness; but this was a part of her stage business. At home, when she had doffed the mask and buskin, freed herself from theatrical restraint, and descended from her pedestal, her native coarseness became the more apparent from the contrast; and no one would doubt that she was the niece and elève of old Madame Savageot.

When he contemplated her in this point of view, M. de Montal, maugre his necessities, almost hesitated; and especially was his resolution cruelly tried, when he recalled to mind some communications of the old aunt, who, in the fullness of her confidence in her "little lawyer," as she termed him, had apprised him that Mademoiselle Julie's hundred thousand crowns had been accumulated from what had been left her by her former protectors;—as this respectable lady chose to designate those upon whom her niece had, earlier in life, bestowed her favors.

M. de Montal tried to flatter himself, that from the words *left to her*, and *former protectors*, his worthy predecessors were dead. But this was not the case. They were only dead in the heart of Mademoiselle Julie, as the count ascertained, to his great discomfiture, when he requested the old lady to be more explicit.

But although the reign of these defunct protectors had been closed for some three or four years, still there was something revolting in the idea of enjoying a wife's fortune, which had been gained by such impure means; and M. de Montal was at times inclined to grumble at his kind Providence, which offered him good fortune, only upon such degrading conditions. But necessity is a hard mistress, and upon this occasion she was inexorable. He consoled himself with the reflection, that rich widows seldom threw themselves away upon needy young men; and that parents would be very unlikely to bestow their well-dowered daughters upon people whose only dependence was upon their stars, or upon tickets in the Frankfort lottery;—and without even giving a hint to his fair intended, or picturing to himself her exultation at the prospect of becoming a countess, he determined to send for her to his house, impart his purpose to her, and make her his wife at once. It was one morning, then, about a fortnight before Ewen de Ker Ellio set out for Paris, that M. de Montal awaited the coming of Julie to make the announcement.

CHAPTER VII.

MARRIAGE.

Having bestowed so much attention upon the moral qualities of M. de Montal, it may not be amiss to say a word about his person.

He was of middle stature, slender and well-proportioned. His countenance, at first view, had a fresh and open appearance, which, however, vanished upon close examination. Certain incipient wrinkles and an habitual knitting of the brow, betrayed the workings of an unquiet mind; while his thin and prim lips, denoted insincerity. His hazel eyes sometimes took an expression of sweetness and humility; but generally, they were quick and lively. His nose, thin, sharp, and prominent, gave him an air of finesse. His face was oval in its general contour. His teeth were neither regular nor handsome.

Upon the whole, M. de Montal was what would be called a good-looking man—with a fine figure and a very *distingué* air. He dressed with excellent taste. While waiting for Julie, he had remained in *deshabille*. His costume consisted of a French cashmere robe de chambre, red drawers, and Turkish slippers. He was pacing the room up and down in a state of visible agitation, when he heard the street-bell ring. He started—a momentary shudder seemed to pass across his frame, and he exclaimed, with a resolute demeanor:

"It must be so! There 's no time for hesitation!"

The door opened, and a young woman entered. She was tall, slender, and about twenty-five years of age. Mademoiselle Julie—for, as will be anticipated, the visitor was no

less a personage—was dressed with great plainness; not from poverty, but from avarice. Her little mohair capote, with difficulty was made to cover the heavy curls of dark-brown hair which hung in masses down each side her face. Her eyes were large and black—her mouth small—her lips red and pouting—her teeth of pearly whiteness—and her complexion clear and brown. In a word, notwithstanding the simplicity of her attire, Mademoiselle Julie was charming. One thing alone detracted from her charms. She left her fine manners, as we have before remarked, at the theatre;—some folks are so nice, that they can never bear to use anything that is borrowed.

Mademoiselle Julie had left her umbrella and socks in the ante-chamber. She now took off her muff, shawl and hat, handed them one by one to M. de Montal, and watched with some solicitude how he left them.

The count, in his abstraction, chanced to throw the shawl over the hat; and Mademoiselle screamed out—

"My hat! my hat! Take care, Edward, you'll break it as flat as a pan-cake."

"Oh, my dear Julie, excuse me, I did not think——"

"But you must think: the hat is almost new. Come, I'm none of your careless ones—I take good care of what is mine, I'd have you to know. But what maggot is running in your brain, pray tell me, that you must put me to the inconvenience of coming here after the rehearsal? Give me that tabouret for my feet. You are polite, I don't think."

"My dear Julie," began the count, kneeling beside the fauteuil upon which the lady had thrown herself, and resting his elbows upon the arm of the chair—"my dear Julie, I have something very serious to say to you."

"Oh! but you do look genteel there upon your knees, with your gentle smile and coaxing air," said the lady, a little softened; but she continued, "Well may you look your best, for I'm a-going to scold you."

"Scold me for what, dearest?"

"For what, indeed? You're a pretty one to execute my commissions, are you not? I sent you day before yesterday to take the measure of my foot to Melnote for a pair of brodequins, and when I stopped there to-day, he had never got the order. Very civil in you, is it not?"

"My dear little girl, I told Oliver to go, and I thought——"

"Oh, you thought. What had Oliver to do with it? If I wanted a servant to go, could I not have sent Annette? I asked you to attend to it, because I wished to be certain that it was attended to. See what I get for relying upon you."

"Well, my love, don't scold me, it is quite punishment enough to know that I have disappointed you——"

"No, it is not enough!—for you always treat me so. Did n't I tell you, the other day to see that I had my cold *bouillon* between the play and farce? You know that when I play in two pieces, I am so fatigued that I need it."

"Well, did I not go to Very's, and order it for you?"

"And if you did, was n't it so greasy that I could n't drink it? You ought to have stood by and seen them skim it."

"Come, my angel, do n't be angry; it does not become you. Nothing makes your pretty mouth look so sweet, as your charming smile."

"Oh, do n't try to come over me with your flattery. I'm not angry,—that is not it. I'm grieved, because you do n't care as much for me as you used to. Yesterday, I asked you to get some biscuits for Tripotte. You know how much the little slut loves them, and how much my attention to her pleases my Aunt Savageot whom I love so much, and you never thought of it."

"Well, that is a matter which is easily remedied," replied the count, with an effort to suppress his impatience; "besides, you know I have stopped at nothing to please the old lady."

"And well you may try to please her. I've told you often, Edward, I love you dearly. I have preferred you to many a richer man, and I would not take that from you, (biting her nail;) but if my aunt Savageot was to say to me, 'Julie, you must choose between me and your Edward,' I believe I should have to give you up, my poor darling. I should be the most unhappy of all creatures, for I love you dearly. But, my dear, how your room smokes! I wish you would open the window a little."

"You will catch cold. The fire-place seldom smokes—it is surprising."

"Well, if it seldom smokes, I must be very unlucky; for it smoked the last time I was here: but what on earth did you want me to come here for? Could you not talk seriously to me at my own apartment?"

"No! my love; no! For both our sakes, I thought that what I had to say, had better be said here. Yes, my Julie," he continued, passing his arm around her waist, "I thought that a matter which concerns us both so nearly, had better be discussed at my own house."

"Why, how affectionate you have grown, all of a sudden! What in the world is coming now? I'm fairly puzzled! It must be something very genteel, I'm sure. You are so loving, so tender, so coaxing, when you please! You deceitful wretch! Aunt Savageot calls you her 'little lawyer.' Now if you will only be a little more attentive to my orders, I 'll call you my little commissary. But, come! you must open the window; this smoke is intolerable. Perhaps the draft will make the fire burn. I should think that this chimney was so astonished at the sight of fire, that it did not know what to do with it.

Give me my shawl; I shall get hoarse—and I play in the first piece to-night. Oh! I forgot: I knew I had something to say to you about the theatre. You may shut the window now. Blow the fire a little, and it will be well enough."

It is impossible to describe M. de Montal's irritation during this scene. He took good care to suppress it, however; for it would not do to get in a passion when upon the point of announcing to Julie the honor he intended to confer upon her. He shut the window, returned and placed himself at Julie's feet, with the intention of broaching the important subject at once; but the lady took the lead, and started off upon a new track.

"I knew," she began, "that I had something to say to you about the theatre; and this is it: Just as I was entering the house this morning, to attend rehearsal, I heard my name pronounced. I looked about, and there stood that old wretch Ducanson, who has invented so many infamous lies about me. I got out of patience, and retorted. He became more insolent. I told him that I would inform you of his impertinence. He said he did not care a sous for me, or my lover either; and well he might, for you pay not the slightest attention to anything I say to you upon the subject."

"But, my dear Julie——"

"Oh! mon Dieu! I know what you are going to say. You will tell me, again, that Ducanson is an infirm old man, whom you connot call to account; but what is that to me? he is none the less insolent, and you will not protect me from his insults. Now, I should like to know whose business it is, if not yours?"

"But, my love, what would you have me do? You admit that Ducanson is an infirm old man. Now, if I were to take him up for his insolence, what good would it do? I should only render myself ridiculous."

"Oh! of course, monsieur, I cannot expect you to put yourself to any trouble on my account;—it is much better that I be insulted with impunity."

"But, my good girl, have I not, at all times and upon all occasions, sustained your interests and taken your part?"

"And do you throw that up to me?"

"No! not at all; but I do think you are unreasonable in this matter."

"I unreasonable! Now I supposed that, in accepting you for a lover, I should have one who would espouse all my quarrels, partake of all my dislikes, and regard my enemies as his own."

"But, Julie, hear me——"

"Oh, mon Dieu! if I had wanted a lover who would keep me merely for his own amusement, I could have had my pick out of a dozen; but I had no occasion for a mere fashionable, who would scorn to come near my theatre, and would think he did his part by showing me off in his carriage, giving me money, and sending me presents. God be thanked! I am under no necessity to take up with such kind of people. No! I am independent of the world already. I lay up my earnings, besides; and I can afford to give my heart to one I love, without asking one red copper in return: but I look for protection from the insolence of Ducanson by him, at least."

M. de Montal's lips grew white with rage; but, by a violent effort, he controlled himself sufficiently to say, in a gentle tone:

"Julie, be just—reflect, have I not done everything for you, upon every occasion, that a gentleman could do, except——"

"Yes, except when you found it more convenient to leave me to take care of myself;—you will assign the same reasons, I suppose, for not interfering in the case of that rowdy Grenouillot."

"Grenouillot, who is he?"

"What! who is he! do n't you know him? he is the chief of the *Claqueurs*, and belongs to Ducanson's clique; and that is the reason that Mademoiselle Darbot,—the hateful little spider! gets such rounds of applause whenever she appears, while my entrées are scarcely noticed."

"But really, Julie——"

"But really—but really, I know what you are going to say—and do you think, that because you managed to have little Darbot slightly hissed two or three times, you have done your duty? Does it follow, that I am sufficiently applauded? You know, well enough, that I always want an enthusiastic reception, and that I cannot do justice to any part without it. Well, when I complain to you of Grenouillot, your answer is—what? Why, that he is only a claqueur, and you cannot compromise yourself so far as to notice him. So it is always, just the same answer over again. And because one of these scamps is a claqueur and the other is old and infirm, I must continue to endure their insolence, just as if there was no other way of quieting them than by calling them out."

"But, my angel, what way is there? only tell me what way?

"What way! a thousand! since you are not able to buy Grenouillot off with money, he might be treated with more civility and courtesy; Ducanson too, is very accessible to the proper advances; easily cajoled, and put in good-humor."

"But, Julie! would you——"

"Would I? no! I'd sooner be cut into inch pieces, than give the wretch a civil word."

"Well, then, how——"

"How? why, I expect *you* to do it. You have not the same reason to stand upon your dignity, that I have; for he is not your equal, and, with a little address, and a little flattery,—and Heaven knows, that you have enough of

both!—you can, if you will only take the trouble, disarm this brute of a fellow. For example: he is a great gourmand;—invite him to dinner occassionally,—it will not cost you much; then you can feed his vanity as well as his belly. Make a friend of him, and out of regard to you, he will let me alone hereafter."

The Count de Montal, listened to this programme of the respectable part he was expected to play, with apparent resignation; he kept his reclining position by the side of Julie, but he looked upon the ground, and the violent throbbing of the arteries of his temples, would readily have betrayed to a close observer, the intensity of the rage that was burning within him. After a short time, however, he looked up, and threw upon Julie a look so full of tenderness, submission, and deprecatory supplication; that the girl, who was really good-natured at heart, and loved M. de Montal dearly, after a fashion of her own, was entirely subdued. The count perceived and pursued his victory;—carrying her hand to his lips, he exclaimed, with a wonderful degree of devotion—

"My angel! I have done wrong, I confess it; but only pardon me, and hereafter you shall be obeyed, no matter what the cost."

"No, no, my love; it is I, who ought to ask your pardon, and devour you with kisses;" cried Mademoiselle Julie, with tears in her eyes, as she slid down beside her lover, and putting her arms around his neck, embraced him distractedly. "It is I that have done wrong;—ungrateful wretch that I am, to scold my poor little cat for nothing at all, when I believe he would jump into the fire to please me. 'Tis abominable in me—and yet he never gives me a word back, but only asks me to forgive him and to love him."

"Julie, I knew that it was your head and not your heart that spoke; my dear, good Julie."

"I am not your good Julie: I am an unnatural monster. What wicked nonsense I have been talking! Just as if your feelings of self-respect were not my own—as if I should not feel as much mortified as you, to see you humble yourself before such creatures as Grenouillot and Ducanson. I am a fool—a downright idiot,—but so it is; we never know when we have got a good man till we lose him. But you, my poor dear fellow, you have only one fault—you are too good-natured, too affectionate."

"How could I be otherwise, Julie, to one who loves me so much?"

"But you humor me too much; you ought to scold me sometimes—I am sure of it, for do you know what my aunt Savageot says? I will tell you. She says to me, 'I mistrust our *little lawyer* now and then; he is too submissive to all your whims and fancies. If I was in his place, I know I should give you a sound rating sometimes.'"

"Poor, dear child! I could never bear to give you pain."

"But you ought to be sincere with me, because you do love me. What right have I to forget all you have done for me? Did not my aunt Savageot tell me long ago, 'Select a man who will keep your accounts; find safe investments for your money; go to your notary for you; make your bargains with the manager; see that your tradesmen do not overcharge you; and be, in fine, your factotum;' and have you not done all this, and are you not perfectly indispensable to me?"

"Is it surprising, Julie, that I should take an interest in your concerns? are they not as important to me as my own? is it not my duty to aid you, and encourage that spirit of order and economy, which enables you to manage your affairs with so much sagacity and to such advantage?"

"How well you talk—how correct all that is! And it is because your conduct is so well regulated, and you are so honorable, and——"

"But, Julie, do not lie there upon the floor, my dear."

"Yes, let me lie at your feet, I have done you injustice, and it is my proper place."

"But, my angel, it is not so—rise, I beg of you."

"Well, take the big chair yourself, and I will set in your lap."

"Be it so. There; now give me both your hands, and do n't look at me so tenderly with those great black eyes, or you will drive all my thoughts out of my head; and I have really got something very serious to say to you."

"Poor Edward!" replied the girl, "I never knew you look so grave, and speak in such a solemn tone before. Have you really got something serious to say to me?"

"Yes, very serious; and for that reason I sent for you here to say it."

"Well, I believe you; for now I think of it, Edward, you look just as you did the day when we pledged ourselves, the one to the other. Do you recollect, I hesitated a little? when you said, in a voice at once sad and solemn, but very sweet, 'Julie, I swear by this ring, the last gift of my dying mother, and which I now give you, that I will, from this time forth, be to you the most devoted and faithful of lovers.' Then—then do you recollect I melted into tears, as you did also, and I said, 'Edward, I am thine—thine for ever.'"

As she spoke, her large black eyes swam in tears at the happy reminiscence.

"Ever cherish the memory of that happy day, my best beloved Julie. The ring of my poor dying mother was no less a pledge of my esteem and respect, than of my love. Yes, I had already studied you deeply, and discovered your inestimable value, in spite of all the follies of your youth. I recognized in your bosom a pure and noble heart."

"You are too good. Whatever merit I may possess, I owe its existence to you.

Your treatment of me has been such, as to excite me to endeavor to prove worthy of your love."

"I believe you," cried M. de Montal, with exultation—"I believe that my love has been the means of reinstating your mind in its original purity. I have watched you long and closely, and every day has increased my satisfaction. You have justified the deep affection I have felt for you, and now I am proud of my attachment to you."

"Ah! who is there like you, that would say as much?"

"Who but you, my Julie, could inspire such sentiments?"

"Dearest—go on."

"Listen, then, my Julie; it is time that your love, your tenderness, and, more than all, the dignity and propriety of your conduct, should meet with a suitable return."

"What mean you, my Edward?"

"I mean," replied M. de Montal, solemnly—"I mean to give you a brilliant, a striking testimonial, not merely of my love and my gratitude, but of my esteem and respect."

"Oh! Edward! that must not be; you know our agreement;—you are not rich, and I positively will not take anything expensive from you. No, I tell you, a banquet of ten francs cost, on my fête day, is the extent of all I will receive. I want no present; your heart is enough for me."

"Noble woman! what elevation of soul! but fear not," added M. de Montal, with a smile of mysterious triumph; "the present I am about to offer you, though far beyond your expectations, you will gladly, joyously accept."

"What is it?"

"My hand!"

"What mean you?"

"That I will marry you, my adored one. Yes; I am determined to brave the sneers and prejudices of the world, to devote my life to you, and give you my name. Now, will you refuse that present, Madame the Countess?"

So saying, M. de Montal, with his brow radiant with smiles, quietly waited the explosion of over-satiated vanity, gratitude and delight, which he expected would break forth.

Mademoiselle Julie, at first, seemed struck dumb with amazement; and then, rising from his knees, she threw herself into another *fauteuil*, and hid her face in her hands.

M. de Montal, believing her overcome with joyous surprise, approached, and, kissing her tenderly, whispered—"Pardon me, my angel, I should have prepared you by degrees for this happy——"

Before he could conclude, Mademoiselle Julie sprung to her feet, and, repulsing him roughly, exclaimed with an accent of concentrated bitterness and chagrin—

"Ah! it is just as my aunt Savageot said."

"What is? my Julie, what did she say?"

"She said that you would deceive me!"

"How?"

"That you intended to marry me!"

"What?"

"Yes, I see it all now! Oh! but this is too much! It is for my money, then, that you pretend to love me. It was in the hope of marrying me that you took such good care of my concerns. Oh! Edward! Edward! and I have loved you so disinterestedly;—how cruelly you have dispelled this illusion!"

So astonished, so mortified, and so exasperated was M. de Montal at this refusal—as offensive as it was unexpected—that he remained, for a time, pale, speechless, and trembling with rage. But Julie, whose self-love, as well as avarice, was wounded, could not contain herself, but broke out with a fresh strain of indignant objurgation:

"Yes," she exclaimed, "My aunt Savageot was right; I no longer wonder that she looked with suspicion upon your submissive and cringing deportment. It is all plain enough now; you were after my fortune, and it was well worth the trouble, too;—a hundred thousand crowns well invested, and fifty thousand francs a year, salary and benefits. I did flatter myself, that I was young and good-looking enough to excite a little disinterested affection, such as I felt for you. Oh! did not my aunt Savageot see through you at once? she was not so blinded by affection as I have been. She told me in the beginning—'Be on your guard against this de Montal; use him, but watch him; he is a regular profligate, over head and ears in debt; and, if you are not careful, and get into his power, he will leave you nothing but your eyes to cry with;' and now, see how it has turned out! Oh! Edward! Edward!" continued Mademoiselle Julie, with not a little real dignity, "and is it possible you could make such a use of the ring of your dying mother, to effect purposes so disgraceful?"

These last words raised the passion of M. de Montal to an ungovernable pitch.

"My mother's ring!" he said, pointing to another ring upon his own finger, "is here. Do you think I would prostitute it by bestowing it upon a creature like you? You are a greater fool than I thought you. I am only trifling with you."

"Then monsieur, in making your mother's ring the instrument of a base deception, you have prostituted it far more than you would have done by bestowing it upon a creature like me," replied Julie, with an air of noble pride that pierced the count to the quick.

"Be silent!" he roared.

"Ah! well, I never saw you when you threw off the mask before. What a face! 'tis frightful! You terrify me—I must be gone."

M. de Montal seized her by the arm.

"To tell everywhere that I have offered to marry you, and that you have refused me, I suppose?"

"Edward! Edward! you have no right to detain me!" screamed the actress. "Let go

my arm, you hurt me—let go my arm, I tell you."

"Go, go, and play your part by all means," cried M. de Montal, in bitter irony,as he grasped the wrist of the girl with the tenacity of a vice; then throwing her suddenly off, he continued, "now, beware! What has passed here is known to you and me alone. If it is ever known to another, I hold you responsible for it. Understand me; I have shown myself an able friend,—if I become your enemy, I will destroy you."

"Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!" cried the unhappy girl; "and is this all the return I receive for my love?"

"Your love! and have I not paid dearly enough for it, by my forced attentions to your detestable old aunt—by my humiliating and unworthy vassalage to yourself—attending to the details of your low occupation, and soiling my hands with your theatrical quarrels and intrigues?"

"And this is all your devotion—all your care!"

"Is the creature, then, vain and stupid enough to think that I would make such a donkey of myself for love of her?" cried the count, shrugging his shoulders. "I, in love with you? No: I sought you as my mistress for the sake of rivalry—to excite the envy of richer men than myself. I became tired and disgusted with the part I was playing, and I thought I would marry you for your money. Yes, for your money! Do you hear? Do you understand me now? The idea was revolting enough, and I had a severe struggle with my sense of propriety. But no matter. I'll be revenged! Do n't permit yourself to doubt it."

"You will be revenged, because I would not permit you to put a halter around my neck; is that it? and that, after I had found you out. Is there anything more base, than for a man in your situation to marry a girl like me, because she has money? Is there any confidence to be placed in such a man? I liked you well enough as a man—for that bound me to nothing; but I would die a thousand deaths before I would marry you. If ever I marry, it shall be with a man whose probity of character will be some guaranty for my future welfare and happiness."

"Be gone!—go to the devil for a husband! but never presume to take my name in your mouth again."

Such scenes are painful. It is humiliating to behold a man so servile and cringing, when he hopes to attain his object;—so coarse and brutal, when he finds that he has missed his aim: but the sketch is true to the life. These are not the days in which to be astonished at anything, and every one, if he will but search the records of his memory, can call to mind things quite as strange and extraordinary.

The reader, we trust, has seen enough of Mademoiselle Julie, to convince him that any further attempts of the count to possess himself of her purse, by means of her person, would have been futile.

Brought up in poverty, with misery constantly before her eyes, Julie, above all things, dreaded an old age of penury and distress; and hence, pushing her frugality to the verge of avarice itself, she led the close and economical life we have before described. Such a woman, with few wants—a naturally cold disposition, and a fund of sound sense, holds on to her money with a wonderful degree of tenacity. And, however flattering to her vanity might be the idea of becoming the wife of the Count de Montal; there was no danger of her putting that honor for a moment into comparison with the honor she felt, of being served by that amiable personage.

M. de Montal's main-spring of life was vanity; and judging Julie by himself, he thought that, by arousing that principle in her breast, he was certain to obtain his end. He was deceived.

After mademoiselle's departure, the count passed some hours in the most cruel agitation of mind. Her refusal had destroyed his last hopes; he had less than ten thousand francs left; and this small sum gone, what had he left but suicide, beggary, or crime? He railed, literally, at the Providence which he had trusted so implicitly; and had almost arrived at the pitch of despair, when a new idea occured to him, which at once restored his confidence in his star.

M. de Montal had sometimes met, at the house of his friend, M. Roupi Gobillon, one M. Achille Dunoyer, a banker of great wealth, somewhat past the prime of life, but full of vanity and low ambition; anxious to be considered a man of fashion, to which end he aped all the ridiculous extravagance and luxury of the aristocracy.

M. Dunoyer had not attempted to conceal, that he considered the opportunity of meeting M. de Montal a great privilege. M. de Montal was a member—thanks to his connection with the Marquis Beauregard—an influential member of that set of gay and elegant young men, among whom it was M. Dunoyer's most ardent desire to be admitted, and by every one of whom he esteemed it an honor to be recognized.

The banker had made the most extraordinary advances to the count, who, not seeing how he was to make any use of him, received him rather cavalierly, and had somewhat studiously avoided him. But now that his hopes in regard to Mademoiselle Julie were blighted, and his success had become so circumscribed, the count began to think, that so rich a man as M. Dunoyer was not exactly to be despised; and to contrive how he might manage to take advantage of the long-proffered and long-refused intimacy, which he had slighted.

Such was the position of M. de Montal, just before Ewen de Ker Ellio left his home, to look after his deposit with the house of Du-

noyer;—and as the banker is to make no inconsiderable figure in our history, we will take this opportunity to introduce him.

CHAPTER VIII.

M. ACHILLE DUNOYER.

M. ACHILLE DUNOYER'S office was situated in the Place de la Bouree; but he resided with his family, on the first floor of a great house in the rue de Provence.

This gentleman had two daughters, who were lodged in the third story of the same house, under the surveillance of an English governess;—an arrangement which often subjected the young girls to disagreeable encounters upon the stairs, between their own apartment and those of their parents. Dunoyer would have much preferred to have occupied a single house with his family; but Madame Heloise Dunoyer insisted upon residing in the Chaussée d'Antin; and it was impossible to find a hotel of moderate dimensions, in this Fauxbourg St. Germain of finance.

Madame Heloise Dunoyer was about thirty-eight years of age. She had married very young; and her two children were—Therese, seventeen years old, and Clementina, fourteen.

For the sake of following the fashion, as well as of getting rid of a duty, which threatened to interfere with her love of pleasure, Madame Dunoyer had procured an English governess, as we have already said, to whom she intrusted the instruction and management of the young ladies, in the third story.

We are far from denying the English system of education, all the praise it merits; but we do contend, that those of our fashionable mothers, who think that all which is necessary to constitute a governess, is that she should call herself Miss Ashton, or Miss Turner, are liable to be sadly deceived.

However that may be, Madame Dunoyer had an English governess—and the only fault she could find with her was, that her name, Miss Jenny Hubert, was somewhat too Frenchified. She would fain have had her change it to Miss Mortimer, or Miss Bloomfield; but the proud Englishwoman would not condescend to humor her in this particular.

Madame Dunoyer was considered, in the society in which she moved, what is called *a lioness*. She rode on horseback, with brandebourgs and high feathers. She smoked cigars; and, as a sort of pictorial illustration of her character, in her boudoir hung an equestrian portrait of herself, in full costume, beneath which was suspended an Arabian bridle and head-stall, garnished with crimson.

But madam was not only a lioness, but an artiste. As to music, she had a grand piano and made grand pretensions;—she called *Robin des Bois, de Freyschutz; Beethoven, Beetovvv;* and *Weber, Webrrr*. In literature, she professed to follow Voltaire; and her skill, as a painter, was shown in coloring lithographs, which covered her tables by hundreds.

While Madame Dunoyer amused herself with her fashionable follies and dissipations, her children were left to the sole care of Miss Hubert, and never saw their parents, excepting for a few moments at the hour of dinner—the time, by the way, which we have selected, as the most fitting in which to introduce our readers to the family of the banker.

The two pupils of Miss Hubert were just entering the boudoir of their mother. Madame Dunoyer was a beauty, of the red-cheeked and vulgar order. She was of low stature—had a short and thick neck—and a very full and florid countenance. She was rather stout, and laced herself most uncomfortably to conceal her embonpoint—which increased apace, as she advanced in years. Although it was late in the day, Madame Dunoyer still wore the fantastic morning deshabille in which she had received her early calls.

Mademoiselle Therese Dunoyer presented, in her personal appearance, a striking contrast to her mother. She was tall and slender, and her complexion, as pure and white as alabaster, was the more dazzling still, for being surrounded by hair of the deepest black, which fell down in heavy tresses over her temples. But the most striking feature in her pure and somewhat sad countenance, was her eyes; which, large, languid, and of the most brilliant jet, fell upon the beholder with a gaze pensive and melancholy, but mysterious and powerful. One thing more remains to be noticed: above her left eyebrow was a small natural mark, the mention of which will recall to the mind of the reader, the mysterious portrait of the castle of Treff Hartlog;—to which, indeed, in every particular, this young girl bore the most perfect resemblance.

Clementine, the younger sister, was the living image of her mother. She was short, fat, and her joyous rosy countenance beamed forth like the sun in its glory, from a forest of coarse red hair. Like her elder sister in her attire alone, she was dressed in black.

Miss Hubert, the governess, was a young lady of thirty-five. She wore her long flaxen hair braided, and permitted it to fall in two separate portions over her sallow cheeks. Her air was reserved and haughty; and she took no pains to conceal, that she thought it a great condescension on her part to superintend the education of a banker's daughters;—for Miss Hubert, like most English governesses, was connected (as she said) with the élite of the English aristocracy. Clementine was Madame Dunoyer's favorite. In the gay, boisterous, and somewhat vulgar demeanor of her youngest daughter, she recognized and loved herself in miniature; but Therese, always reserved, silent and pensive, excited, at once her jealousy, by the superiority of her charms, and her dislike, by the dignity of her

deportment;—both of which feelings were heightened by the consciousness, that the unhappy girl was the fruit of an unlawful, and unfortunate amour.

Soon after marriage, and during a long voyage which her husband had undertaken to foreign parts, Madame Dunoyer yielded to the seductions of a man of high rank; who soon tired of his vulgar conquest, and deserted her for a new inamorata. But, unfortunately for her, upon her husband's return, the proofs of her infidelity were so apparent, that his suspicions were aroused; and the birth of Therese became the signal for the commencement of the most bitter domestic dissensions and unhappiness. Restrained by the fear of losing his wife's property, and, also, by apprehensions of the ridicule with which a public exposure would be attended, M. Dunoyer at length concluded, that his best course would be to overlook the frailty of his partner. Years, and the birth of another child, to whose paternity his claim was indisputable, softened his bitterness toward the real offender; but the innocent offspring of the offence he could never regard with equanimity. Upon Therese was lavished all the brutality and abuse which his unpleasant reminiscences sometimes elicited; and, strange to say, in this he was not only abetted, but seconded by her mother; who seemed to think, that by such an unnatural course of conduct, she could at once propitiate her husband, and revenge herself for the desertion of her former lover.

Such is the difference between innate nobleness and baseness of disposition. The high-minded, when once they have committed a crime, strive to overcome the pangs of remorse by humility and gentle goodness. The coarse and vulgar, render their first offences unpardonable, by the brazen impudence with which they strive to shake off the consciousness of wrong, and by the unfeeling indifference with which they regard the consequences of their errors.

It was about five o'clock, when Miss Hubert, attended by her pupils, entered the boudoir of Madame Dunoyer; and, almost at the same moment, M. Dunoyer made his appearance in great good-humor, radiant with smiles. He was a little man—thin, active, and dressed with very great care. A physiologist—especially one of those who delight in tracing a resemblance between the human face and the physiognomy of different animals—would have been struck with the remarkable similarity of expression which existed between M. Dunoyer and a goat. The low forehead, little twinkling eyes—pointing obliquely upward toward the temples; the projecting under-jaw, large mouth, and flaring nostrils, which characterized the countenance of the banker, insensibly reminded one of that coarse and wanton animal. The habitual expression of his features was a combination of every coarse, base, and sensual passion; mingled with an overweening degree of pride, vanity, and self-conceit. But, by one of those strange organizations with which nature sometimes seems to amuse herself, the brutal and forbidding countenance of this man, at the slightest notice or approach to familarity of a man of rank, became overspread with smiles the most servile and sycophantic imaginable.

M. Dunoyer, as we have said, entered his wife's apartment with an air of triumph.

"Heloise!" he exclaimed, "we are to have some one worth while to dine with us to-morrow; have everything in high order, for it will be no common occasion, I assure you."

"Hey day! Achille!" returned the lady; "and pray, who is it that you are going to make such a fuss about?"

"One of the most fashionable men in Paris;—a gallant, who is hand and glove with all the duchesses of the Fauxbourg St. Germain; a dreadful rake, but one of the finest fellows in the world; and what is more, a confidential friend and adviser of the ministry; a man of great shrewdness in every capacity, especially among the women. You have seen Julie—Julie of the Theatre Français, I mean, the fair actress who is so much admired, and who has been courted by the whole world of fashion; the rich, the powerful, and the high in rank, but all in vain. Now, my man had only to say, 'Mademoiselle, I'm your humble servant,' and, behold! he sacks the fair Julie in spite of them all."

"But do tell us the name of this Don Juan?"

M. Dunoyer, who took a pleasure in tantalizing his wife, continued:

"All in good time. You shall know him; he is very friendly with me, and I hope you will lay yourself out to please him. I met him at the house of M. Roupi Gobillon, the minister; and that makes me think that our Don Juan, as you call him, can get me elected deputy, if he chooses to give me his influence. He is the luckiest man in the world; succeeds in all he undertakes; and he is so adroit. Oh! he would make a devil of a diplomatist!"

"Really, Achille, it is very improper for you to tease me so before these children; it is setting them an abominable example," said Madame Dunoyer." She found nothing objectionable in the matter of M. Dunoyer's communications, notwithstanding the nature of the subject and the presence of two young girls.

"Well, well, Heloise, do n't get into a passion; you look as if you were ready to swallow me. I'll tell you the name of my friend, for fear you should take a prejudice against him."

"I certainly shall, if you annoy me any longer about him."

"Well, it is the Count de Montal;—who else but he?"

"Not possible!" exclaimed the lady. "Well, if we get him here, the Duboises will

burst with jealousy. Oh! I've heard so much of M. de Montal—and I've seen him, too, at the opera. To be sure, I will lay myself out to please him. There's only one thing I am afraid of, he looks like a very great quiz;—besides, one evening in coming out from the opera, I overheard him talking about Madame Dubois and her sister-in-law. Oh! what fun he was making of them. Did n't he show them up? However, there was no great harm in that, for they deserved it, the proud chits, with their grand airs. But, Achille, do you know that M. de Montal is the intimate friend of the Marquis de Beauregard, the husband of that pretty American lady who looks so simple?"

"Certainly I do; and more than that, the marquis is the king of the rakes, and de Montal is the prince. What a grand seigneur that marquis is! how he spends the money! They do say, that he went to America to recruit his finances, and that his wife brought him some millions."

"But does he not support an opera dancer, Mademoiselle Rose, notwithstanding his marriage?" asked Madame Dunoyer, playing with the hair of her youngest daughter, whose head was resting on her knees.

"Yes, and her sister too, they say;—for both are seen at times in his box at the opera; but his little fool of a wife never seems to suspect anything."

"Ma foi! so much the worse for her—the poor thing! In spite of all her beauty, I think she looks very stupid, with her puritanical bonnet, and her grave airs. She looks like a nun," said Madame Dunoyer.

"Is it because she looks like a nun, that she appears so stupid?" asked little Clementine.

"You love of a child!" cried Madame Dunoyer, embracing her daughter with every mark of affection; "'pon my word! what an idea that was! She is so free-spoken—that girl—she can never conceal, for a moment, what she thinks."

"That is an accomplishment which may be carried too far," observed M. Dunoyer, sententiously.

"Faith! I like her air much better than if she was reserved and hypocritical," remarked the mother, throwing a contemptuous look upon Therese.

"Oh, certainly!" rejoined M. Dunoyer, who caught her meaning, and also cast an ill-natured gaze upon the poor girl; "certainly! still water runs deep. Your deceitful characters should always be watched, and never trusted."

Therese appeared utterly unconscious; but she understood these unkind allusions perfectly. Miss Hubert listened, with a slight curl of the lip.

Therese's silence and apparent indifference awakened the ire of Madame Dunoyer. "I should think, mademoiselle, that it was worth your while to pay a little attention, when the conversation turns upon hypocrites," she remarked.

Therese made no answer.

"Therese!" cried M. Achille, "do n't you hear your mother?"

"I was not aware that the conversation referred to me," replied the young girl.

"And who, did you suppose it did refer to, if I may presume to ask? to the parson's cat?" exclaimed madam, in a rage. "I think, if there is a hypocrite here, it is you."

Therese made no answer.

"Ah! miss obstinate, wont you answer?" cried the mother, excited beyond all bounds.

"Mademoiselle," put in M. Dunoyer, "instead of braving your mother thus, you ought to feel humbled, and say, 'Mamma, I will never be a hypocrite more.'"

"Mamma, I will never be a hypocrite," said Therese, without raising her eyes.

"Now, does she not deserve a good beating?" cried madam. "See how she sulks, with her eyes on the ground—the deceitful hussy!"

"Oh! dear mamma, do n't scold Therese!" cried little Clementine, kissing her mother.

"If I do scold her, it is because she deserves it," replied madam. "She has been nothing but a plague to me, ever since she was born."

No sooner had she said this, than the banker's wife bit her lips in vexation.

M. Achille Dunoyer threw upon his wife a bitter and malignant look: "Well may you say she has been a plague *ever since she was born;* but the less you allude to such things, the better."

"I shall say what I please," returned the lady, "and you wont hinder me!"

"I tell you, again, that you had better not awaken the recollection of some events in your past life, madam."

"Ah! papa, papa, do n't scold mamma!" exclaimed Clementine, throwing her arm around his neck.

"And let me tell you, sir, that if those events have occurred, they had to be overlooked, because some folks found that it was for their interest to overlook them. Do you understand me, sir?"

"Oh! if it were not for the presence of your children, I would tell you what I thought of you!" cried M. Dunoyer.

"Yes! and if it were not for the children, I 'd tell you what I thought of you! Oh! you need not put yourself in a rage; I 'm not afraid of you!"

Miss Hubert arose, and, with a haughty and supercilious air, said to the children: "Come, young ladies, your father and mother wish to be left alone."

"Yes, yes, Miss Hubert; take them out if you please," cried M. Dunoyer, pacing up and down the room, in a violent fit of agitation.

The two young ladies and their governess, left the room. "Shut the door!" bawled out

the master of the house; then turning to his wife, he began—

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, to provoke me in this manner, and before your children?"

"Who began it, sir; did I?"

"What, madam! and have I no right, then, to express my indignation at your past conduct? What, madam! because I have been so generous as to forget——"

"Generous, I think you said; great generosity, forsooth. Come, I like that. I should like to know how generous you would have been, if you had not involved my property in your business to such an extent, that you were afraid to say anything which might lead to a settlement between us. The fact is, you thought it better to hold your tongue, than to render me an account of my funds; an undertaking which would have brought both ruin and disgrace upon you."

"And is your conduct any the less criminal on that account, madam?"

"And is your clemency any the more honorable on that account, sir? Can you deny that you have permitted your passion to be reined in by avarice, sir?—generosity, indeed! How many times have you reproached me with your generosity? It is a thing to boast of, is it not?"

"And, do you think, madam, that I have no blood in my veins; that I can endure the presence of that living witness of your infamy always before my face:—that girl, who is no child of mine? I wonder at myself;—at my forbearance—that I have not, long ago, turned her into the street!"

"Do what you like with her: what do I care?—who hinders you? Did I ever take her part against you? Have I not always shown my preference for her sister? Has not my dislike for the great sullen thing, been enough to convince you that I was sorry for what was past? Now what more would you have?"

"I would have you, madam—when those unpleasant recollections, in spite of myself, force themselves upon me and make me nervous and irritable,—I would have you try to soothe me; or, at least, not endeavor to excite me still further."

"And do you think it is very agreeable to me to be reproached before this Therese, especially, at the very times when I am giving her a scolding?"

"*Mon Dieu*, madam! everybody gets into a passion at one time or another; and I'm sure I've as good right and reason to do so as any one else."

"Well, who hinders you? I don't care how much you get in a passion, so that you select the proper time and place. Suppose there had been strangers here—what a pretty exhibition this would have been? to say nothing of that Miss Hubert, with her cold, sneering, impertinent air. I'll warrant she did not let a word escape her."

"And whose fault was that? It was an idea of your own—nothing but an English governess would suit you, and now you find you are paying enormous wages—for what? for a spy to watch over you."

"I choose to have an English governess, because it is the fashion to have one; and I took Miss Hubert because the Duboises wanted her. For the matter of being a spy, she has not much chance, as she is never with us except at the dinner hour; and it is your own fault, if she hears anything then that she should not;—as to her wages, the four thousand francs a year that we pay her, is not a going to ruin you."

"Oh! I've nothing to say about that. Do I ever interfere with your expenditures, or object to your doing what you please with your money?"

"And do I ever interfere with your doing what you please?"

"I never said you did."

"Then it is certainly very foolish for us to quarrel."

"Well, whose fault is it?"

"Whose, indeed?"

"Whose?" cried M. Dunoyer, gladly catching at the chance of shifting the responsibility from himself; "why, it is that Therese—the sullen hussy! I'll warrant she is rubbing her hands with glee, now, because she has set us together by the ears."

"Heavens! you are right. It would be just like her, to get along with Miss Hubert and make fun of us. I've no doubt they are as intimate as two thieves. Yes; if she had not driven me half mad by her insolence and obstinacy, I should not have forgot myself as I did—for I was in the very best humor at the idea of having M. de Montal as visitor."

"Parbleu! I knew I should please you very much by bringing him here. But see what I get for my pains?"

"Now, Achille, don't let us begin another disputation. Have we not just agreed that it was all the fault of that Therese, who would raise a rout in Paradise itself if she was to get there? What more do you want?"

"Well, let Mademoiselle Therese dine in her own chamber to-day, then," cried M. Dunoyer; "I'm not a going to have such a chatter-box bear the sway in my house."

"You are right, Achille; she shall be confined to her room, the hypocrite!—though I fear that will not be much of a punishment to her."

"What else can we do to her? She is seventeen years old—it will hardly answer to keep her on bread and water."

"Well; we must do the best we can, then."

"Thank God, she is old enough to be married!"

"But who the devil will take her off our hands?"

Thus ended the matrimonial tête-a-tète, presenting a strange, but correct reflection of one of the numerous phases of domestic life in Paris;—and if the baseness and brutality of one of the parties, and the unnatural selfishness of the other, should seem to be delineated with too dark an outline, it must be recollected, that the husband was a usurer, and the son of a usurer, while the wife was but a vulgar upstart of easy virtue.

CHAPTER IX.

THERESE.

The apartments occupied by the two young ladies, were a saloon, which answered the purpose of a school-room;—a chamber on the right, which was occupied by Miss Hubert and Clementine; and another on the left, in which slept Therese and the maid-servant, who waited upon them.

At the hour of dinner, a servant came to call Miss Hubert and Clementine—announcing at the same time to Therese, that her allowance would be sent up to her: a piece of intelligence, which, as Madame Dunoyer had suggested, gave her no sort of concern, but was rather a gratification than a punishment.

The bed-chamber of Therese was large, and furnished not only in bad, but in a sort of meretricious taste; which clearly proved that Madame Dunoyer was not one of those mothers, who cared to see, in the virgin retreat of her daughter, any resemblance to a temper of chastity and purity. Having become tired of a large mahogany bedstead, ornamented with bas-relief in bronze and gilt, representing the loves of the nymphs and the fauns—she bestowed it upon her eldest daughter. The canopy of this bedstead was surmounted by two doves billing; and it was ceiled within with looking-glass.

Over the mantel-piece was a clock, decorated with the figures of a Satyr and a Bacchante, executed in that free style which was tolerated in the days of the Directors; but which has since been deemed inadmissible in respectable houses, since that era of vice and licentiousness. This piece of furniture, Madame Dunoyer had also discarded, but only because she had taken a fancy for Rocow.

These fine things had been bestowed upon, or rather, had descended to Therese, by right of primogeniture, much to the dissatisfaction of little Clementine; whom, however, Madame Dunoyer found means to appease by giving up to her a night-lamp of an Etruscan pattern, decorated with red figures upon a black-ground, which were intended to represent some interesting portions of the celebration of the marital rites, among the Romans.

The culpable indifference of Madame Dunoyer, in respect to these things, was the evidence of a naturally coarse and depraved disposition, rather than of any really evil intent upon the morals of her children. If she had been reminded that they were in bad taste, she would have shrugged her shoulders, and said, she thought them very pretty. If any one had counselled her to have given her daughters chambers of pure white, with a crucifix, and a prie diéu for furniture, and some green boughs for Christmas decorations; she would have replied, that her daughters were not nuns, and she had no disposition to put them in cells.

Miss Hubert, who was full of English prudence, was at first very much scandalized at the strange ornaments which embellished the chambers of her pupils, but she soon understood how it had come about; and as she had only accepted the place temporarily, for lack of a better, she felt no interest in the welfare of those committed to her charge, and manifested none upon so important a concern as this.

Therese, as we have said, experienced a sort of melancholy satisfaction, in being left to dine by herself; nor was she in the least chagrined to hear that M. Dunoyer had sent to take places at the opera for madam and himself—Clementine and Miss Hubert; leaving her to while away her hours as best she might. It was with positive pleasure indeed, that she heard the carriage, which bore them to the theatre, depart. She felt a degree of relief and comfort in their absence; and after locking the door, she drew a couch up before the fire, and taking from under one of its cushions, with a mysterious air, a little morocco-bound book, she kissed it with almost infantile delight. Then, reclining upon the couch, and resting her head upon one hand, which looked like alabaster in contrast with her deep black hair, she soon became absorbed in reading.

Let us, in the meanwhile, endeavor in a few words to delineate the character of this young girl.

Therese was naturally of a good heart and excellent disposition, which, indeed, had not yet been perverted by the bad examples which had been set her, nor by the unwise and injudicious course of treatment to which she had been subjected. But, alas! how deplorable was her situation. Abused by both her parents; deprived of all that care and sympathy, which it is the happiness, as well as the duty of a mother to bestow; her peace and comfort constantly sacrificed to a blind partiality for her sister; intrusted to the supervision of a governess, who was satisfied with walking through her part without an effort; living in a circle, who, destitute of any religious feeling themselves, never attempted to inculcate any sentiments of morality or piety; but who, on the other hand, by their life and conversation, manifested their entire freedom from such constraints, and rendered it impossible for their offspring even to respect those who gave them birth;—into what a depth

of misery and despair was this unhappy girl plunged!

How apt are our passions to justify our faults, by laying them to the account of the injustice we suffer at the hands of others! and hence, what a fearful responsibility is incurred by the unfaithful and unkind among parents!

A sincere and affectionate friend, of her own sex, would have been an invaluable treasure to Therese; but she had none. Diffident and proud by nature, timid by dint of constant abuse, Therese was almost too reserved properly to meet well-meant advances, and quite too much so to make any herself. Besides, the young ladies whom she met in her mother's society, were by no means attractive to one of her turn of mind and feeling.

Therese was a girl of strong and generous impulses, and capable of great daring and endurance—qualities which, properly cultivated and directed, are invaluable; but which, neglected or misled, are eminently dangerous to their possessor. The energies of her mind and will had never yet been called into action—the maltreatment she had received from her parents having hitherto been confined to an endless series of petty annoyances, such as a proud and lofty spirit scorns to notice, much less, resent.

In short, Therese was one of those women, who, with wonderful tenacity of purpose, pursue their bent, whichever way it may lead them, with an unfaltering step. Such people may commit one fault, and that will generally be an irreparable one; they may be ruined, but never become vile, base, or degraded: their love, when culpable, will excite pity, rather than condemnation; and their innate nobleness and generosity of soul sheds a ray of glory even upon their crimes.

We have said, that Therese took a book from under the sofa cushion. After perusing it for some time, her head fell down upon her breast, and she wept bitterly. The book was René.

M. Achille Dunoyer had purchased a library, merely for the sake of furnishing his cabinet, without reference to the character of the books; and from this ill-assorted collection, Therese was permitted to select such as she chose, for her own perusal, from the works of Voltaire, De Prevost, Jean Jacques, De Marivaux, De Parny, De Lesage, Byron, Scott, Chateaubriand, Diderot and Crebillon. The probable effect of such a course of study upon a young, ardent, and unguided mind, can easily be conjectured. The number and variety of these works, and the different lessons they inculcated, were Therese's only safety: one evil impression was speedily effaced by another.

The last novel which had riveted the attention of Therese, and the first which had opened to her congenial spirit the boundless horizon of revery—the wild, solitary, but sweet character of the hero, ever exposed to the storms of passion—excited, in the heart of the young girl, the profoundest sympathy. He was the first hero in whom she had felt love and admiration, unmingled with jealousy. St. Preux loved Julie, Ivanhoe, the fair Saxon and Rebecca, Desgreiux, Numon, Don Juan, had mistresses innumerable; but René, after the fall of Amelie, was like herself, alone and loveless. Her mind, since she had dwelt upon this fascinating story, was full of deserts wild and mist-clad hills; though at times she immured herself in the cells of the sea-girt monastery, with Amelie.

Therese sometimes changed, to suit her own fancy, the denouement of this admirable poem—Amelie was saved; she herself poured the balm of consolation into the hearts of the hapless brother and sister; they, in return, reposed their sorrows, with confidence, in her sympathizing bosom:—their attachment became pure and fraternal; and the love of René rewarded her efforts to soothe and save.

Paris became inconceivably distasteful to Therese: she longed for the country—for the shades of solitude; for the meadows and the sands by the illimitable sea. At times she dreamed, that some unknown René sighed for one like her, as she languished for a lover like him. She imagined some tender and melancholy youth, like him, smitten with the charms of a life of solitude and contemplation, breathing forth the sad question; "When shall I find the woman of my dreams?" And in return, she sighed to herself: "Where shall I find the René of my dreams?"

By a strange coincidence, at the same hour—nay, at the same moment—perchance, Ewen de Ker Ellio was pining in sadness, for the dream-girl of his imagination. Their loves seemed to have been fashioned in the self-same mould, and intended to mingle into one;—but, alas! what an abyss was between them!

It was just about this period, that Ewen de Ker Ellio was on his way to Paris; his object was, to see M. Achille Dunoyer;—he would necessarily see Therese; and, struck with her wonderful resemblance to the mysterious portrait of Treff Hartlog, it was equally certain that he would love her; for Therese was gifted with all those qualities of mind and fortune, with which he had invested the dream-girl whom he worshipped. Why, then, should he not make her his own? —was he not rich—noble?—and would he not, in so doing, fulfill the dearest wishes of M. and Madame Dunoyer, by relieving them of the presence of one whom they hated?

The sequel of this history will show, how enduring were the meshes of that web which destiny seemed to have woven around Therese and Ewen de Ker Ellio.

But to return to the time and place where we left Therese. Never had she enjoyed the magic pages of Chateaubriand, as she did the

long evening during which she was left at home by the play-goers. She forgot the hours, and was still stretched upon the sofa—the book in her hand, and her eyes bathed in tears—when she was aroused by a rapping at the door. Aroused from her revery, Therese started up in as much terror as if the living René had been concealed in her room; she stood for a moment, pale, trembling, and incapable of motion.

"Sister, sister Therese!" cried little Clementine, "open the door; we have got back from the theatre."

"What have you locked the door for, mademoiselle?" said Miss Hubert, in an angry tone of voice.

Therese recovered herself, and smiled to think of her alarm; she hid her book, and hastened to open the door.

"So you locked yourself in," said Clementine.

"Yes, my dear sister."

"And why, mademoiselle?" demanded Miss Hubert.

"Because I was afraid to remain here alone," replied Therese, dryly.

"You are not usually afraid," returned Miss Hubert; "but I have performed my duties in making these observations."

Such was the invariable formula with which the governess accompanied her observations upon whatever might seem unusual in the deportment of her pupils; and whether it made any impression upon them, was of little importance in her estimation.

"Shall I tell you what we saw at the theatre, sister?" cried little Clementine. "We have been to the Palais Royal, and we had *such* fun! Oh, how amusing Dejazet was! She played the part of a marchioness, and she had a gentleman to kiss her when her husband was sick; and she said how much better she liked him to kiss her than her husband, because he was so old. Didn't she, Miss Hubert."

"Oh, yes! certainly; it was, doubtless, a very improving play for young girls," returned the Englishwoman. "Your parents thought it very much so; and, of course, you ought to respect their taste;—and profit by all the moral lessons thus given you," she added, warming her feet at the fire.

The child, anxious to display her good memory, continued:

"And then there was a pretty peasant girl, that the old marquis, the husband of the lady wanted to kiss, and she did not like him, because he was so old, but preferred to be kissed by the same gentleman who kissed the marchioness; and he was always kissing her—that great fellow. Is that the way with all the men, Miss Hubert?"

"Hush! mademoiselle! do n't talk so before me," replied the governness. "You had better ask your parents; it will amuse them."

"My love," said Therese, "there are some things that ought not to be talked about."

"What! such things as I was telling you?"

"Was the house full? Were the dresses handsome?" inquired Therese, anxious to change the subject.

"Oh yes! all the world was there;—and do you recollect the young gentleman papa was talking about before dinner?"

"What young gentleman?"

"Oh! you know, the gentleman that is the lover of that actress at the Theatre Francaise: the one who is to dine here to-morrow."

"Oh: M. de Monta!?"

"Yes, a count—a nobleman."

"Well?"

"He was in a box with some ladies—duchesses, papa said they were."

"There was but one duchess, mademoiselle," put in Miss Hubert. "The Duchess de Miremont, whom I have often seen two years since at my lady's country seat, in England," she added, by way of enlightening her pupils as to the lofty position which she had formerly occupied.

"Oh, dear! how handsome she was; was she not, Miss Hubert?"

"Charming—you never see such elegance and refinement, except displayed by the élite of the aristocracy."

"And by those who have the privilege of being educated under your supervision; you should add, Miss Hubert," observed Therese archly.

The governness made no reply, and Clementine continued: "Oh yes; and she was so genteel in her magnificent lace capote,—and then papa said to mamma, 'Do you see! do you see!—that sad fellow, de Montal, comme il *chauffe* the little duchess?' What did he mean by that, Miss Hubert, *chauffe* the little duchess? I kept that word in my mind on purpose to ask you what it meant."

"And you might put your memory to a better use, miss, let me tell you," replied Miss Hubert. "It is no part of my business to translate your father's indecent remarks for you. Thank Heaven! I don't know French enough to understand them myself. You had better ask your mother to explain them to you. She can do it well enough—I'll answer for it."

"Oh, it could not be anything improper," replied Clementine, "for papa said it to mamma."

"A sure, conclusive evidence of its propriety that, indeed:" returned the governess, with a sneer.

"Miss Hubert," said Therese firmly, "you do very wrong to speak in that way before my sister and myself."

"Oh, mon Dieu! Mademoiselle, tell your parents if you like, pray do. I'm not so fond of this place that I'm afraid to speak my mind, I can assure you."

"But while you retain your place, you will oblige me by speaking more respectfully of my father and mother."

SERPENTINE. Think of his being supplanted by such a one as our modest little deputy.

DES ROCHES, (*aside.*) Cursed vipers! they will spread this infernal story over town like wildfire. But, before I go out with the marquis, I'll break some of this damned fool's bones. (*aloud.*) M. Labirinte, did you write the letter from which M. de Beauregard has just been reading?

LABIRINTE, (*assuming a parliamentary air.*) Monsieur, upon the subject—of that—that letter, I beg leave to observe, that it was evidently a confidential letter—not an official one—and I protest——

DES ROCHES. Did you write the letter? Yes or No?

THE COMPANY. Des Roches! des Roches! Hold! don't make a fool of yourself.

PRINCE CASTELLI. There is not the least occasion for a quarrel. It is all a joke of the marquis's.

DES ROCHES, (*furiously.*) Gentlemen, upon questions where my honor is implicated, I must be the sole judge. And I now tell M. Labirinte, that whoever wrote that letter, is a fool and an insolent puppy.

THE COMPANY. Des Roches! Des Roches!

SERPENTINE. Now they warm up! That's good! It was getting dreadfully dull.

DES ROCHES. M. Labirinte, I repeat it—you are an insolent puppy and a fool!

LABIRINTE, (*rising in parliamentary style.*) Monsieur, you are not in order. The erroneous epithets which you have just applied to me, I cannot accept. I return them——

DES ROCHES, (*rising, and menacing his opponent with his fist.*) Then I'll apply something that you shall accept——

THE COMPANY, (*interposing between the parties.*) Des Roches! Des Roches! be seated! Have you lost your senses? This is out of place!

LABIRINTE, (*whose courage rises as his protectors surround him.*) Oh! you need not think to scare me with your fists, monsieur!

DES ROCHES, (*turning with rage to the marquis.*) To press me to engage such an adversary; a contemptible imbecile; to kill whom—as I must—will only cover me with additional ridicule. Oh! marquis! your vengeance is cruel indeed!

MARQUIS, (*aside.*) I know it is.

LABIRINTE, (*aside.*) Ridiculous! to kill me as he must. Oh! what a tiger! (*aloud, in a parliamentaty tone to des Roches.*) Monsieur, let me tell you, that to *kill* a national representative is a matter of no trifling importance. A deputy is not a bedouin, monsieur!

DES ROCHES. Mille tonneres! You have insulted me, and you shall fight—or I'll know the reason why?

LABARINTE, (*assuming additional dignity.*) Well, monsieur, I will not fight; and I will tell you why. Now, monsieur, that as a representative of the people, I am no longer at my own disposal. I belong to them, monsieur. I have the charge of immense agricultural, political, maritime and commercial interests, monsieur! And, besides all this, an eminent luminary of the law has, from the time of Justin, pronounced duelling a savage and barbarous custom, which——

DES ROCHES, (*contemptuously.*) Recollect, we are not in the Chambers, my little sermonizer!

LABIRINTE, (*emphatically.*) No! monsieur! but we are in France; and to France is due my political existence; to her must I render account of it. And as my political existence is inseparable from my personal existence—my duty to my country, and to my constituents, obliges me to decline your proposition, monsieur. And I do decline it!

DES ROCHES, (*exasperated.*) Then, monsieur, I shall take the liberty of giving your personal existence a sound caning.

THE COMPANY. Oh! des Roches! Why, you are out of your head! Be quiet! recollect!

LABIRINTE, (*very loud.*) I disregard your threats, monsieur. Faithful to my trust, I shall do my duty to my country. I shall have the courage to——

SERPENTINE, (*amid shouts of laughter.*) The courage to be a poltroon. Brave Labirinte! I call for his health with all the honors. Let a civic crown be decreed him, made of hare-skin.

HERMINIE. Yes, in accordance with the old proverb—'timid as a hare.'

(*A conversation takes place.* DES ROCHES *is with difficulty restrained by his neighbors, and while struggling, addresses the marquis, who alone sits unmoved, except by laughter.*) You see, Beauregard, how this fellow baffles me? He has insulted me, and he quietly refuses me satisfaction; nor am I permitted to take it? I shall be the butt of all Paris. It is atrocious, marquis; and it is all your doings.

MARQUIS, (*gayly.*) Mine! mine! my dear des Roches? Oh! you surely cannot be serious; you have too much good taste to say so in earnest.

DES ROCHES. Fool that I am! deceived by this woman; supplanted by this simpleton; mocked by the marquis, and unable, though covered with ridicule, to get satisfaction in any quarter.

SAINT LUCE. Marquis, one word. This whole affair resolves itself into one single question. Is the woman, who has caused this émute, worth cutting throats about?"

ALL THE COMPANY. Right! right! That is it.

SAINT LUCE. It appears to me, that taking into view the manner in which the marquis has related the anecdote; the merriment with which he has treated the subject; and the character of the few lines he has read us from the lady's epistle; that she must be a person

"Very well, mademoiselle," replied the governess dryly, and then turning to Clementine, she said, "come, miss, it is past midnight, and time that you were a-bed."

"Oh, Miss Hubert, just let me finish telling my sister about the play."

"Make haste, then, my dear," said Therese; "what else have you to tell?"

"Oh, you shall hear, you shall hear. Well, between the acts, M. de Montal quitted the box where the duchess was, and immediately papa jumped up and left our box, saying to mamma, 'I'll go and meet the count in the lobby, and bring him in here.' And then mamma she fixed her ruffles, and tugged away at her waist ribbon; and then she turned around and said to Miss Hubert, 'Is my ferronniere right in the middle of my forehead, miss?" did n't she?"

"Oh yes! your mamma had displayed her usual correct taste by wearing a diamond ferronnière under a hat with plumes," replied the governess with grave irony.

"Well, just then papa opened the door and brought in the gentleman, and mamma rose and received him standing."

"Yes, that is perfectly correct; your mamma rose and received the gentleman standing;—as a mark of the great consideration due to a man of M. de Montal's character, doubtless. True, it is not usual for a lady to rise to receive a gentleman; but, in this instance, it had a very fine effect, especially as your mamma is rather an elderly lady, and M. de Montal a young man."

The bitterness of this speech, Therese, and she alone, appreciated; but she restrained her impatience, though with difficulty. Clementine continued:

"And then M. de Montal saluted mamma, and begged her to be seated."

"Which your mamma could not be prevailed upon to do; you should add, so great was her veneration for M. de Montal, who looked young enough to be her son," put in the governess.

"Yes, sister, as Miss Hubert says; mamma remained standing all the while the count was with us. I saw a great many people look up at our box, and heard them laugh, but I do n't know what it was at; I saw nothing to laugh at, but I kept my eyes upon the gentleman who is coming to dine with us to-morrow. Oh! ain't he an elegant fellow, and so well dressed? how I should like to have him hug and kiss me, as that fat country boy did the marchioness in the play! that was fine:—was it not, Miss Hubert."

"Certainly; you understand the moral of the piece perfectly. That was what your parents took you to see it for, no doubt; and they will have every reason to be satisfied with the lesson it has inculcated."

"Come, come; to bed, to bed, you little chatter-box," said Therese to her sister.

Clementine and Miss Hubert retired.

Therese betook herself to her couch, and dreamed of René.

CHAPTER IX.

M. LE MARQUIS DE BEAUREGARD.

At this period of our history, we shall beg leave to introduce to our readers a personage of whom we have hitherto but casually made mention: M. le Marquis de Beauregard.

As a key to the character of this gentleman, we will, in the first place, remark that his life was a sort of living protestation against what he called the pitiful meanness, and sordid parsimony, of the would-be fashionables of the day. According to the marquis, unless a man could be imperially prodigal, he had better live humbly in the Marais and make no pretensions. He recognized no middle class in the world of fashion. There are poltroons of all sorts, he was accustomed to say, but the most contemptible are those who, having once taken the field against destiny, tremble, shrink from the cost, and look back.

The doctrine that he inculcated was, that a man had need to be very rich, to ruin himself with eclat; so that the splendor of his career might, in some measure, compensate for the darkness in which it closed. The price of a piece of fire-work he said, of which, after a single quarter of an hour, nothing would remain but the stench, might purchase fuel enough to warm one the winter long; but then, what comparison was there between the humble and unpretending light that gleamed from the fire-place, and those jets of flame which, mounting to the clouds, tinged them with purple and gold;—those torrents of fire which seemed to set heaven and earth in a blaze, and those gushes of sapphire, and ruby, and emeralds, which for the moment made the stars themselves turn pale! "To be at once logical and moral, that is complete and beautiful," said the marquis, "prodigality ought to charm and delight the multitude, without cost to them, or injury to any one of them." As to those miserable pretenders, who, instead of living quietly and respectably in honest mediocrity, ruin themselves basely, by vain attempts to imitate those above them;—men who sacrificed credit and honor for the sake of driving a pair of matched horses, instead of one; of having half a dozen cheap courses upon their table, instead of three; of losing ten louis at cards, instead of five francs; of keeping one ugly mistress, to deceive them at a high price, instead of being jilted for nothing;—as to these rats, as the marquis called them, who ate their mouldy cheese in a sort of terra incognita; he had for them the most unmitigated contempt, and declared, that such wretches committed the same sin against the world of fashion, as hack-writers and lawyers did against the French character for wit and refinement.

Not content, however, with preaching up this crusade in behalf of veritable magnificence, against unworthy pretensions to it; the marquis took the cross himself in full force, and added example to precept. He had already considerably impaired his enormous fortune in this way, at the time we speak of. But Paris could, even then, boast of but few houses equal to his; his cheer was still exquisite; his music unrivalled; and his whole establishment replete with every refinement of luxury and comfort. His balls were inimitable; for, in the production or the management of a fête, he had no equal. In the autumn, he hunted over his estate of Beauregard, in Dauphiny—the best grounds in France; and then at his princely château, he entertained with all the hospitality of an English lord—which is saying all that can be said in praise of a country life.

The masterly style in which he finished all that he undertook, gave token of no common mind; but aside from this, the marquis was distinguished by other striking characteristics. He was eccentric to a striking degree—and his eccentricity grew out of the strange contrast between his natural goodness of heart and delicacy of feeling, and his stupendous affectation of cynicism and perversity.

In theory, there was no greater roué in Paris than the marquis—but, in reality, there were few who were oftener taken in; and this he was always ready to admit, with great good-humor and gayety.

No one knew woman, better than the marquis;—no one possessed more facilities to win her. With a handsome person and unlimited wealth, he was master of every art; to the tender, he could be devoted—could take by surprise the indifferent; could dazzle the eye of the simple by display, overcome the modest by audacity, and attract the coquettish by disdain:—never, in fact, was there a man, who knew so well how to mingle grace and impertinence, tenderness and presumption, courage and self-denial, until the melange became a charm almost irresistible. In theory, he was a Don Juan—a Lovelace, without conscience or compassion, if you would but believe him; and yet, never was there a more perfect slave of the fair, than the marquis.

Did he expatiate upon the social system, as he professed to view it—you would start back in amazement at the depth of his depravity, and his utter disregard of principle. He seemed to wish to found a sort of despotism, the end of which should be, to secure present enjoyment at any cost, and to trample upon misery, poverty and distress, to attain that object. To one who knew little of him, he would appear to be hideously avaricious, selfish, egotistical, without faith; without soul, without honor—(except the point of honor, which he had ever sustained with marked intrepidity.)

And yet the purse of the marquis was ever open to his friends, and to the needy; his extreme good-nature and liberality, made the peasantry upon his estates the laziest and happiest fellows in France. His agents continually pillaged him; and he was too careless, either really or affectedly, even to invest in the funds a large sum arising from the sale of an estate, saying, that a gentleman ought always to live directly from his landed property; and that the idea of securing a petty interest of four or five per cent., from money deposited, was quite beneath his dignity.

But this was not all—the marquis affected the most entire contempt for the most sacred duties and relations of life. His father being of a strong constitution, had lived to a very great age. As long as the old man was in health, there was no end to the atrocious witticisms of the marquis upon his longevity; and his complaints of the hardship of being obliged to wait so long for his inheritance, were worse than those which used to disgrace the drama of the last century.

One of his friends once met him, and said—

"I have just seen your father—he looks ill: at his age the slightest indisposition is very much to be dreaded."

"Flatterer!" answered the marquis.

At another time—it was a cold day in winter, his father said to him—

"It freezes hard enough to split the rocks, and yet here I am, eighty seven years old, wearing nothing but a single surtout. I believe I have vigor enough now, to live till I am a hundred."

"Why will you always be saying such disagreeable things, monsieur?" replied the marquis pettishly.

And yet at the slightest approach of indisposition, the marquis passed his days and nights by his father's couch, and lavished upon him the tenderest and most filial cares. When his father died, he was entirely overcome; his grief was sincere and profound, and so lasting withal, that it was only assuaged by time and foreign travel.

After the lapse of some years, as we have already observed, the marquis found his fortune somewhat impaired; and concluded it would be best to recruit his finances by means of an advantageous matrimonial connection. True to his character, the marquis had no sooner determined upon this expedient, than he began to give utterance to the most inconceivably insolent remarks upon the condescension of the great lords, who stooped to connect themselves with ladies of inferior rank. The latter, he said, were but too much honored, in being permitted to lay their fortunes at the feet of those who picked them out of their dung-hills, cleaned away their plebeian filth, and gave them human appellations. Still, he said, it was sometimes necessary for men of rank to manure their lands in this way; and the money of a rich, though

vulgar father-in-law, was a sort of comfort which was not so bad after all.

But the marquis having once determined upon his course, was resolved to effect his purpose by a master-stroke of policy; to which end he forthwith embarked for Havana, in search of an American heiress; for he was a firm believer in the existence of an El Dorado across the sea.

At Havana, he lingered some months, under circumstances almost revolting to a man of his tastes and habits; but he endured all with fortitude—having selected a young lady of sixteen, named Dolores, and the daughter of Seignor Pablo, a millionaire, as the object of his choice. To win the consent of the father, the marquis lavished as much finesse and exercised as much diplomacy, as would have sufficed for the consummation of twenty treaties: to gain the affections of the daughter, he displayed grace and elegance enough, and expended wit and assiduity sufficient, to have conquered twenty of the most coquettish of the Parisian belles—and in spite of all his airs of Don Juan, and his Lovelace stratagems, he finished by becoming seriously, nay, desperately in love with the young Spaniard; and the day which made the young southern beauty his own, was indeed the happiest day of his life.

The marquis had never taken the trouble to speak of business to his father-in-law. Confiding in his reputed wealth, and his presumed liberality—besides which, having become attached to the young lady—he thought it beneath him, as a great lord, to inquire about the amount of her portion; so he signed the marriage contract without looking at it. It was enough for him to invent a nickname for his reputed father-in-law, whom he denominated, indifferently, the Huron, the Inca, or the Red-skin;—whichever appellation came most handy.

The wily old step-father, consequently, was left to do as seemed to him good; and, consequently, he endowed his daughter with some millions of acres of wild land in Texas, upon which he laid out a paper town, which he called Beauregardville, in honor of his aristocratic son-in-law; and the marquis, in return for this princely liberality, was made to settle upon his bride, with her charming blue eyes, the round sum of four hundred thousand francs, out of his already impoverished resources. Of this portion, too, the marquis was, by virtue of his unread marriage contract, obliged to pay down the sum of one hundred thousand, to be expended in the improvement of his Texan property; so that, instead of recruiting his diminished finances, he left America with that much less in his pocket, one woman more, and a great estate; and the city of Beauregardville in prospect.

The marquis had too much sense not to see that he had been taken in by his worthy father-in-law; but he had too much the feelings of a great lord to take any notice of it. His love for Dolores, also, came to the assistance of his pride and disinterestedness; and he satisfied himself by the reflection, that he had at least learned one thing—and that was, that when a nobleman goes a fortune-hunting, he ought to take a lawyer with him, as his valet-de-chambre.

He returned to Paris; and, constant to his system of affectation, by way of showing that he had got a rich wife, he redoubled his extravagance; and to convince the world that he had not married for love, he retained in his pay his old mistress, and engaged her sister, also;—both of whom, in order to evince an attachment for that which he did not feel, he exhibited nightly in one of his boxes at the opera.

To carry out the matter, at his bachelor's dinners, which he still kept up, he challenged his roué acquaintances to make love to his wife, and only begged that they would make him their confidant if they succeeded. He represented her as a simple, ignorant little creole, who knew little else than how to feed her father's pigs, and one who would be much improved by an introduction to the ways of the world, and to life in Paris;—an introduction, by the way, which he vowed he could not take the trouble to give her. And yet this strange being loved his wife devotedly—nay, almost madly.

A word now as to the connection between the Marquis De Beauregard and M. de Montal. When the latter made his debut in the fashionable world, the former was in the zenith of his glory. His wit and his magnificence was the universal theme of conversation; his authority in matters of taste was supreme: the wildest and most extraordinary adventures were attributed to him, and his courage and success in several duels, in which he had been involved, had given him the reputation of a veritable *preux chevalier*.

M. de Montal's admiration for the marquis was unbounded; he strove to imitate him in his wit, his impudence, and his profligacy—but his attempt proved a failure; he had neither the talent nor originality to follow his leader in the first two qualifications—his means were soon exhausted; and now there only remained to him the somewhat equivocal consolation of thinking, that he had once been a sattelite, revolving about this brilliant planet. In his turn, the marquis, without having much esteem for M. de Montal, did not exactly rank him among the cheese-eating rats, whom he despised;—though he, at times, reproached him with his folly in ruining himself to no purpose, he was not entirely insensible to his assiduous flattery; and without much regard, he still endured him, snd even occasionally sought his society.

This connection with the marquis, upon any terms, was all important to M. de Montal; and he neglected no opportunities of

strengthening it. According to him—and he took especial pains that the marquis should know his opinion—that eccentric gentleman was just what he aspired to be thought—the worthy successor of Bassompierre, of Richelieu and of de Lauzun: he was, in fine, the only man in Paris, in Europe, or in the world, who understood human nature, or who knew how to live.

Upon this occasion, the marquis, though secretly flattered, replied to M. de Montal, with his usual cynicism—

"You either want to borrow money of me, or to make love to my wife: I have five hundred louis at your service, if that is what you want; or, if you prefer it, I will introduce you to the marchioness to-morrow. Take your choice; and then I shall be able to enjoy your flattery with a clear conscience."

M. de Montal, at that time, had money enough left to justify him in declining the proffered use of the marquis's purse, and his wife he considered as entirely above his pretensions; so he refused both offers, and by this show of independence, rendered both himself and his flattery more acceptable.

The marquis was, indeed, somewhat touched by this unexpected show of disinterestedness—he shed the light of his countenance more freely and graciously, though he did not fail to abuse him roundly, at times, about his connection with Julie. Such people, he said, no gentleman ever connected himself closely with; they were mere articles of luxury—a means of getting rid of money; but to use them without paying for them, was bare-faced robbery.

It was at this period of our history, that, one morning, the marquis made a call upon M. de Montal. A close observer might have perceived the traces of care, anxiety, and even agitation, upon the countenance of the gay noble, before he entered the house; but, once *tête-a-tête* with M. de Montal, he was as calm and placid and philosophical as ever.

The motive of this visit we will explain in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRESENTATION.

M. DE MONTAL was taking his tea and toast at his usual hour in the morning, when the door was flung open, and the servant announced the Marquis de Beauregard.

The marquis was at this period about forty years of age; of good stature, and admirably proportioned;—though his figure, once remarkably delicate and slender, had become more robust as he advanced in life. He was still in his morning undress, which consisted of an easy-setting frock, of a brown color, the broad velvet facings of which were thrown back upon his shoulders, so as to expose a light satin waistcoat, surmounted by a neck-cloth of pale blue silk beneath;—his pantaloons were of light silver-gray kerseymere, loose, and fell far over the highly varnished brodequins in which his feet, of aristocratic dimensions, were indued;—his chestnut hair, in massive natural curls, which were here and there interspersed with a solitary silver thread, overhung his pale and lofty brow;—his eyes, large, full and black, were fringed with long lashes;—his eyebrows, clearly pencilled and arched, were uncommonly high set. This latter characteristic of indomitable pride, together with the naturally imperious bearing of the marquis, and his constant habit of looking upward wherever he was, marked him out at once, as one who was not accustomed to hear his superiority questioned. For the rest, his aquiline nose, of the most manly, yet delicate cast, well became the general beauty of his countenance; a sort of half-smile, half-sneer, played upon his lips; his chin was massive, prominent, and gave an expression of great resolution to his face; he wore no beard, but small mustaches, of a silken texture, and of the same dark chestnut color as his hair.

The voice of the marquis was clear and silver-toned, and he spoke with the veritable accent of Parisian high life. Nothing but the embroidery and gold lace of the costume of the last last century was wanting, to constitute the marquis the moral and physical representative of the great lords of the reign of Louis XVI.—an epoch when M. de Lauzun was the model of elegance, and M. de Lauraguais the standard of wit, humor and satire.

Whether it was from habitual deference, or because M. de Beauregard was the beau-ideal of a marquis of the ancient régime, we will not undertake to say, but he was always addressed by his title alone, even in these democratic days; and spoken of as *the* marquis, as if he had been the sole ensample of his order extant.

M. de Beauregard, then, such as we have described him, entered the Count de Montal's saloon, in his usual unceremonious way, and accosted its inmate with a mixture of gayety and good-humor:

"Why, my dear fellow, where the devil have you been this age? It is a week since I have seen you at the club. There are sad reports about you—and I thought I'd come and tell you what they say."

"What reports, marquis? You alarm me."

"Oh! they say you have been subjected to a public exposure, before a whole theatre."

"How? Where?"

"At the Palais Royal. Oh! what a pillory! In a box with a vulgar fat woman, the man her husband, and her child, madam —— madam ——"

"Heloise Dunoyer, marquis."

"Heloise, ha! Not the nouvelle Heloise,

by all accounts, though. But how could you commit yourself so? True, a man of fashion sometimes does such things out of caprice, or to gratify some whim; but then he should always tell his friends, beforehand, to avoid being laughed at. I did something of the same kind myself, some ten years ago. I'll tell you how I managed it.

"Do, marquis; a lesson from you is an inestimable favor."

"Then thus it was: a strange idea came into my head one morning, just as I awoke; it occured to me that I had never made love to the wife of a judge. Good! said I to myself, there must be something curious in having a flirtation with the wife of a gentleman of the long robe; what a devil of a talk that would make! I'll do it, certainly I will; but where shall I find one? I don't know a judge in the whole circle of my acquaintance."

"That must have been somewhat embarrassing, I should think, marquis."

"For the moment it was, but I soon got over the difficulty. What is the best way to get acquainted with a judge? thought I. Why, to have business at the court, was the ready answer; I must go to law with somebody."

"Very true, that, marquis."

"Yes, and very easy to accomplish, also, as you shall see. I then occupied the hotel de Verneuil, a property left me by my great-uncle, in the rue de Grenelle. My next neighbor was an old miserly curmudgeon, the most tenacious old wretch, so far as regarded his personal rights, that I ever knew, and a perfect savage in temper. Now, I wanted a process which would bring me in contact with a judge, in order that I might get up a flirtation with his wife; so I sent upon the spot for a dozen masons, and made them pull down the wall which divided my garden from that of my amiable neighbor."

"But, marquis, I should have thought that would have driven him mad."

They worked so expeditiously, that, in two hours, our two gardens were merged in one."

"But your savage neighbor?"

"Oh, he always spent his mornings upon the boulevard of the invalids: when he returned and saw what I had done, he raged and stormed like a wild beast, and came to demand what I meant by such conduct."

"And what explanation did you give him?"

"Explanation! I told him, that I adored him—that it was impossible for me to live any longer separate from him—that I was now about to have the party wall between our houses demolished—that our apartments might hereafter be in common—and our very existences might mingle into one, and I set the masons to work again. My neighbor thought me crazy; he hurried to get out a process to restrain me. I stood upon my defence, but, out of respect to the law, agreed to suspend operations for half an hour. He brought a suit that brought me into court; then I made the acquaintance of the judges, and through one of them, M. Joseph Renardeau, I became acquainted with his wife."

"So there was a Madame Renardeau then, marquis?"

"An enormous one, my fine fellow, as fat as your ancienne Heloise. In short, by means of this law-suit, (which cost me, by the way, some ten or twelve thousand francs,) I made my way into the house of Judge Renardeau, and then everything else followed, of course."

"But the exhibition you mentioned; how was that?"

"In this wise: you know I have a small lodge at the opera-house, besides my own box; well, this I offered to the domestic Themis; and she, forsooth, decked off her plump person with all the fine things she thought would most become her jolly round face, blue eyes, and flaxen hair, and took me at my word."

"Well, did not this make you repent of your strange fancy?"

"Not at all; this is the very thing I was going to explain to you by way of example: the evening before I publicly announced at the club, that there would be an exhibition of a female Renardeau in my box the next night, told them what my strange fancy was, and how I had embarked in a law-suit to gratify it. The story took admirably, and spread like wild-fire. At an early hour the whole fashionable world were lorgnettes in hand, waiting the arrival of the Renardeau and the Renardeauillons, for she had two or three cubs, you must know. Upon the entrance of my man and his family, he was received with a round of applause from the whole circle of my acquaintances; and never, I'll answer for it, either before or since, did the worthy judge create such a sensation in his tribunal. Now, my good fellow, that is the way to avoid ridicule when you feel yourself impelled to some foolish thing. Be frank with your friends, tell them beforehand that it is intended for a joke."

"I might profit by your lesson, marquis, only that my case differs somewhat from yours. But what was the result of your flirtation with the judge's wife? Did you find it as amusing as you expected?"

"Upon my honor as a gentleman, she was very much like everybody else, and so was her husband like other husbands. But your great coarse Dunoyer—your ancienne Heloise? Excuse me for repeating the phrase, it is so very applicable."

"You shall know all about it, marquis, for I want your advice very much, and I will follow it implicitly; for all the knowledge of the world I have, I obtained from you."

"Then you flatter me by the good opinion you seem to entertain of your own accomplishments?"

"And well I may, marquis:—but to my story. The ancienne Heloise is nothing to

me. How much is Achille Dunoyer estimated to be worth?"

"I don't know how much he is worth, but his father was said to have left them three or four millions."

"A very handsome property, which he has, doubtless, increased; and this Dunoyer has but two children, daughters, marquis."

"Ah ha! now I understand you. But there is one thing in your way, my dear fellow;—though you might be willing to stoop to the connection, be assured he would never fancy you for a son-in-law. I know these money-making old cits. He will be delighted with your acquaintance. You will be a feather in his cap. He will give you dinners—oh! such dinners! Nay, he will lend you two or three hundred louis, perhaps, if you ask him; and deny himself a new equippage to enable him to do so without loss; for your company will afford him more eclat than a new pair of horses, and at less expense, too. But do n't permit yourself to believe that he will give you one of his daughters."

"He may not give me one; but suppose I take her?"

"What! run off with Mademoiselle Dunoyer? Come, I like that better. But, my dear fellow, do n't you know that such things as abductions exist now-a-days, only in tradition; that the present race of girls believe that they never occurred except in romance? a circumstance which tends to demoralize the little angels sadly, too."

"Listen to me, marquis, and do not do yourself the injustice to believe that one of your pupils is a fool. I will be frank with you; and as a mark of confidence, I will begin by telling you about Julie."

"What! that you offered to marry her, and she refused you?"

"How! do you know it already?" cried the count, turning pale with rage.

"Why it was all the talk in the green-room of the opera-house, yesterday and the day before. Little Flora was telling every one how the old aunt Savageot abused you for trying to *seduce* her niece into marrying you. Yes, *seduce her basely*, as she called it. I could not but laugh at the idea of calling a legal marriage *seduction*;—but every one has their own notions upon such subjects. Of course, I was too much your friend to believe a word of the nonsense; besides, I knew you loved Julie too well, to attempt any such thing. Let me assure you again, that I would never admit the possibility of such an act of infamy. And now let us return to Mademoiselle Dunoyer; she is better worth talking about."

"You are right, marquis. Well, then, three weeks ago. I dined for the first time with M. Dunoyer."

"And what sort of a girl is the one whom you intend to honor? Some dowdy; a regular country girl, I suppose?"

The count rose, went to his secretary, and produced from a casket a minature, which he handed to the marquis.

"What do you think of that face?" he asked.

"Charming! beautiful! a spice of the devil in the expression, however. But who is it?"

"It is the portrait of my great grandmother, the Viscountess de Montal, one of the most beautiful, and, at the same time, one of the most diabolical women of the day. She flourished during the jovial days of the Regency. Her life was a romance, the denoeument of which was terrible. Her folly, to call it by no harder name, brought the most frightful disasters upon my family. Such as you see her there, she caused the death of one of my grand-uncles, the grandfather of my Breton cousin, whom I have named to you."

"The Baron de Ker—Ker——; oh, I never can remember those Breton names."

"Ewen de Ker Ellio, who lives like a real country gentleman in the castle of his ancestors, upon his own estate."

"Yes—Ker Ellio; and his gandfather?"

"Came to his death in a most shocking manner, by means of this beautiful creature whom you see portrayed here."

"But what has the portrait of your great grandmother to do with the daughter of this Dunoyer, pray?"

"By some strange chance, it is the exact image of her."

"Pshaw! my good fellow, the resemblance, I suspect, is either very much magnified by, or exists altogether in, your amorous fancy."

"By no means! I assure you that the resemblance is perfect throughout. The faces are identically the same, even to that small natural mark which you see above the left eyebrow."

"Indeed! well, that is really extraordinary. And what is strange too, since you have been talking of it, I have a confused recollection of having seen the same face myself, a long time ago. But where? where? By heavens! I am certain I have seen it, but I cannot recollect where. No matter, go on: The Dunoyers are rich; one of the daughters resembles your grandmother, and you want to run away with her."

"Why I know not, but so it was—that Therese (that is her name) was not present at the dinner to which I was invited by M. Dunoyer, and I might not have seen her at all, had it not been for the tattling of a noisy little fright of a child, her younger sister, who betrayed that she was confined to her room as a punishment, and complained that such was often the case. This at once revealed to me the favorable circumstance, that Therese was the butt of the family, and gave me an opportunity to intercede for her. She was sent for and came; but how can I describe to you my surprise at her face, her figure, the elegance of her manner, the sweetness of her voice, and the grace of her motion! Such

evidence was there of good blood, and so great was her superiority in point of natural endowment to those about her, that I was convinced that the ancienne Heloise, as you call her, must have made a *faux pas* some sixteen or twenty years ago. What is curious also, is, that just about that time one of my uncles, who bore a remarkable resemblance also to this portrait—I refer to the Marquis de Senonges—was in Paris just about——"

"There! there! stop one moment, my good fellow, you have put me on the track. When I told you that I had a confused recollection of having seen some one who was very much like this portrait; I was thinking of your uncle, the Marquis de Senonges. Ah! yes, he was a fine fellow, and his taste ran very much in the way of city beauties; why, he used to be called the Richelieu of the bourgeoises. He had served with distinction as a colonel in the army of the empire."

"The same, the same, marquis!"

"Yes, yes, Senonges, I recollect him well; his only fault was, that he had rather too much the air of an officer of the opera comique, instead of the Guarde Imperial—looked as if his name was Saint Leon, or Saint Ernest, and as if his sole inheritance was a good heart and a bad head, and his occupation that of a colonel of hussars; but these things made him very popular in the Chaussée d'Antin; he was cock of the walk in those districts where the rich city dames strut and spread their plumage. Pray, what the devil has become of Senognes?"

"I know not; he embarked for South America long ago, and we have never heard from him since."

"Well, let us return to Therese, who is probably your cousin by the Marquis de Senonges, and as beautiful as an angel, or rather, by your account, as a fiend. You were at dinner——"

"Therese took no notice of me at dinner; I spoke to her, but she answered me dryly. I made no impression; it was necessary that I should gain an insight into her character. After dinner the neighbors came in; I had been announced, and of course was the lion of the day. The ancienne Heloise sat down to the piano, and I engaged the fright of a child in a conversation. I had conceived the idea that Therese was a great novel reader. Your quiet abstracted girls, of a melancholy temperament—especially if badly treated—are apt to be so, to escape the discomforts of their situation; they are prone to take refuge in the world of romance. From the younger sister I soon found I was not mistaken. Therese read a great deal, and selected for herself from her father's library. This library was open and connected with the saloon. I strolled into it, and there I found Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Marivaux, Byron, and others of the same class. Therese has great opportunities to become a knowing one, thought I. Next I examined the sets; they all seemed complete, until at last I came to Chateaubriand, and there the volume containing *René* was missing. The riddle was read. Therese was under the charm of that sombre but bewitching production. She was in love with René or with Chactas. And as I was neither René nor Chactas by reputation or in appearance, it was to my deficiency in that respect, that I owed my cool, nay, almost repulsive, reception. What do you say to that, marquis?"

"An inference very skilfully deduced—but go on."

"Fortunately—owing, I suppose, in part to my preoccupation with the matter in hand, and in part because I thought the Dunoyers not worth much pains—I had not endeavored to shine when at table; and was, in fact, rather dull: my air of abstraction had not been amiss, for it could not be offensive to one in Therese's state of mind. No change of deportment was necessary; and, at the proper time, I might attribute my reserve to a fit of melancholy, which should be quite in character with the subject of her meditations. Leaving the library, I returned to the saloon, and after complimenting the ancienne Heloise upon her musical taste, I addressed myself to the daughter; who was sitting, sad and pensive, in a corner of the room. I placed myself so that she was obliged to listen to me; and, as soon as I could, turned the conversation upon the subject of literature.

"Suddenly Therese demanded of me, with a sort of delightful impertinence, *if I ever read.* 'Not many books,' I replied, 'but those which I like, I read over and over again; for instance, the works of Montaigne—the nouvelle Heloise, and René.' 'Do you read René, monsieur?' she asked, as if the idea had something sacrilegeous in it; 'do *you?*' 'Yes, mademoiselle, I do read René,' I replied; 'is there anything surprising in that?' The poor girl had been brought up so rudely, and her savage nature permitted to run wild so long, that, notwithstanding her innate refinement, she could not help replying—'I am sorry, rather than surprised, monsieur.' 'Sorry for René?' I asked, with a smile. The girl saw that her fantastic passion was discovered, and blushed to the ears. I went on—'René, mademoiselle, treats me better than you seem to suppose; unworthy as I am of him, he receives me kindly, permits me to love him, and never harshly repulses an unhappy mortal, doomed to subsist upon the factitious joys which society has to offer."

"Now, my dear fellow, if your Therese did not laugh in your face at that speech, she is a natural fool!"

"She did laugh in my face."

"Good! I like her; go on—the girl interests me."

"She did laugh in my face; but I kept my countenance, muttered something in an under-

tone, and took my leave as if hurt by Mademoiselle Dunoyer's want of sympathy. Now I was sure of one of two things—either Therese would think that she had disconcerted me, and it is always flattering to a young girl to think she has obtained the advantage over a man of the world, like myself—or else she would think me in earnest, and regret that she had so abruptly rejected that very sympathy which she seems so much in need of. In any case, I should become an object of some interest to her, and her feelings toward me might be softened."

"It may be so; but so far, I see nothing very wonderful in your generalship; you have carried on the ruse correctly enough, but that is all——"

"One moment, marquis—I 've not finished yet. I observed that when Therese was sent for, Madame Dunoyer said to the servant, 'Tell my daughter to come *down*.' It was evident, then, that her apartment was on a different floor from that of her mother."

"By means of the fright, I discovered that the two girls with an English governess, lodged on the third story, by themselves. The house was an immense one; there might be apartments to let. I examined the bills when I went out, and found two rooms vacant upon the fourth floor, just above the sisters.

"Ah me! that 's better."

"The next day I sent an upholsterer to hire and furnish this little suite of rooms, in the name of one M. Bernard, a country gentleman, who wished to have an apartment in Paris, where he could spend a few days occasionally. This was three weeks ago today, marquis. I 'll not tire you with the recital of what has taken place since, but come at once to the present state of things; and, that you may understand them perfectly, here is a letter which I received from the young lady yesterday."

"Very good, indeed; let us see the letter."

M. de Montal handed the marquis the following letter, which the latter read aloud:

'My heart beats—my hand trembles. Mon Dieu! I know I am doing wrong; but, confiding implicitly in your honor, monsieur, I venture to sit down to entreat you to write me no more. Careful as you are in sending your epistles, I tremble to receive them. Why did you, by your very imprudence, force me to take the first one? Why was I weak enough to read it? Oh! monsieur, I conjure you, write no more; and do not remain in that little apartment above ours. Mon Dieu! if you were to be discovered, I should be lost! I believe you—I believe you, when you say that I am the cause of your unhappiness. You say you love me. I believe it; but there needs no such proof of your love as you are now giving, and it may lead to exposure.

'You say you have given up that actress. My father says the same; but for this, I would never have written you. You say that your little retreat is so dear to you, because, when in it, you are near me. You say that is happiness enough; and that, could you be assured that I returned your love, you would ask for nothing more: and then you say that a fatal secret forbids you to ask if I love you. Why then tell me that you love me?'

"Poor little thing! she interests me," said the marquis, smiling; and then continued:

'A fatal secret, say you? Mon Dieu! what is it? Why have you not explained it to me in your long letters? I could not sleep all night, the thought so tormented me. Yesterday, when you were at my mother's, you looked so sad and wobegone, that I could scarcely restrain my tears. When I returned to my room, I wept in earnest. Miss Hubert is so malicious, that I have to be very guarded before her.

'Mon Dieu! what will become of me? My father and mother are so severe! they are not parents to me—and then—— But why weary you with my complaints? A fatal secret prevents, even you, from asking if I love you.

'I will consent to receive one more letter from you—one more, and the last; but only on condition that you promise to reveal that fatal secret, and to be more cheerful than you have been for some days past.

'You complain that I do not look at you when I meet you. At my mother's, how can I? Would you have me weep before all the world? Your looks are so desolate and despairing, that the tears involuntarily start into my eyes. They used to tell me you were so witty, so sarcastic, so gay! and I believed it, and thought you could not love poor René. But you have forgiven me that, have you not?

'Mon Dieu! yes, you are worthy to love René. Oh! I have so much to say to you, when I see you below; and yet it seems to me as if you avoided me. Yesterday, when by chance we were left together for a moment, you said not a word; but you looked upon me with an expression at once so sad and so tender, that it has haunted me ever since; and this it was that forced me to write to you. I could see you always before me. Do not look so sad again. It is not right; 't is dangerous; it makes me think of you too much.

'And now, I know not if I shall have the courage to slip this under your door, as you directed. Mon Dieu! if I should be discovered! 'T is wrong—very wrong. Oh, my mother! why reject my love—my confidence?'

"Here, marquis," said M. de Montal, "you can observe the traces of tears."

"Yes; and then a few words half-effaced by the seal; and then the postscript, written in haste—'*burn this*.' Now, then: when

Therese gently slid this under your door, did you throw it open impetuously, and——"

"Oh! marquis! No! no! I'm not quite such a novice as that. By so doing, I should have given her a fright which she would not have recovered from in a fortnight."

"Good again. Your door remained closed, then?"

"Most faithfully closed. I had advised Therese to wait until Miss Hubert and her little sister had gone down to dinner, and then to take the opportunity of running up to my door."

"Not bad, that. You are teaching her not only to be guarded for the present, but to cherish her expectations of the future—a course of conduct, which, innocent in its inception, inevitably leads on to——; but hurra for you, my promising pupil! you'll do me credit yet."

"Listen: When the first dinner-bell rang—that is, half an hour before the meal was served—I ran to a hiding-place that I had selected; presently the door on the third floor opened, and the fright, attended by the governess, descended with a great noise. Some moments after, I heard the light step of Therese ascending the stairs, hesitating and faltering every moment. Through a crack in the wainscot, I could see her every motion. She looked about her with an unquiet air; leaned her pretty head against the balusters and listened; then advanced, then stopped to listen again;—by degrees, she thus slowly reached my door; then again, for a moment, she hesitated; then assuming, for a moment, an air of recklessness, she stooped down and slipped the letter beneath the door. When she arose, her face was suffused with a blush; her knees trembled—she sustained herself by the baluster, and placed her hand upon her bosom, which palpitated violently; then, over her countenance flitted that mingled expression of boldness and timidity, of pride and remorse, which ever betray the feelings of a young girl, who, for the first time, has committed an act of doubtful propriety. All at once, the voice of the fright was heard calling her from below; like a startled fawn, she took to flight. As she glided, like a fairy, down the spiral staircase, I caught a glimpse of her snow-white neck, her form and her little foot, and then she vanished. Then——"

Before M. de Montal could proceed further, a servant announced M. l'Capitaine des Roches. At this name, a sudden glow of bitter hate flushed across the features of the marquis; but so flitting was it, that even the count perceived it not, as he turned to his secretary to replace the miniature of his grandmother, and the letter of Therese.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INVITATION.

M. DES ROCHES was a captain of Spahis, from the province of Mzeria. To a handsome and manly countenance, he added a fine figure, betokening both strength and agility. His age was about thirty;—his teeth were white as snow;—his hair and beard were black and glossy as the raven's wing. Nothing could be more striking and brilliant, than the appearance this young gentleman made in his oriental costume; but this day he was in a plain, though rich and elegant dres.

Captain des Roches was not only a soldier of approved gallantry, but one of the first sportsmen in France. He was the best horseman, whether for a race or a steeple-chase;—the best shot and the boldest hunter. Among those of his own sex, he was a free, jovial companion—always good-tempered and gay. With the ladies, his success and his discretion were said to be unbounded.

The captain began to talk in the antechamber; and before he could see the marquis he had commenced: "Did you hear of that affair of Beauregard's?" Then, observing the presence of that personage, he ran up to him, grasped him cordially by the hand, and exclaimed, "So, it is not true, then!"

"What is not true?" asked M. de Montal.

"Why, about his duel this morning," replied the captain.

"His duel! what duel? Did you fight this morning, marquis?" cried M. de Montal.

"Eh, mon Dieu! my good fellow, why not ask, is Henry Quatre dead?—yes, I killed Colonel Koller, some three hours ago." And then turning quietly to des Roches, he said, "Well, Bedouin, how do you come on?"

"Very well," replied the captain. "What a devil of a fellow you are, marquis! You finish your business well and quickly! Why did you not take me for your second?"

"And me, too?" cried de Montal.

"Baudricourt and St. Luce happened to be present when my quarrel with Koller took place, and the arrangement was made on the spot."

"Oh! marquis, marquis! you will always be our master in everything!" exclaimed de Montal. "Des Roches, did you ever hear the like! here he has been this hour or two, telling me stories, until I was ready to die of laughter! and just as calm and pleasant as if he had just come from his bed."

"Wonderful, truly! is it not?" returned the marquis. "Am I a boy in my teens? or is this my first affair? Why, what the devil would you have me do?"

"But, what was the cause of this duel?" asked de Montal.

"Koller was always vaunting of his duelling exploits, and it annoyed me."

"I know it did, marquis; and I have heard

you tell him so a hundred times; and I always wondered how the savage submitted so patiently to your rebukes. The poor devil had a great respect for you," observed des Roches.

'I 'm much obliged to him; but the fact was, that last evening he gave vent to some atrocious pleasantries about a duel with my unfortunate friend, D'Armentieres, whom he killed you know."

"A mere lad, whom he forced into it!" observed de Montal.

"Yes; and that irritated me. I insulted Koller as grossly as I could—we fought this morning, and I killed him. That's all; now let us talk of something of more importance."

"Ah! marquis, marquis! You are something too rash for a married man!" said de Montal.

"Talking of married men," observed the marquis—"you do not seem to fancy my wife much, my dear Bedouin. Singular, too—I presented you to the marchioness at the masquerade, when you were arrayed in all your oriental splendor. That is two months since, and you seem to make no progress. You greet her as coolly as if you positively disliked her—at least in my presence—and she finds you perfectly insupportable: that is, she tells me so."

"How, marquis!—is it possible that you have not observed, that des Roches was so openly repulsed by your wife, in return for his attentions to her, that he conceived a great animosity against her?"

"Nonsense! my dear fellow!" replied the captain, laughing. "I'll tell you the truth, marquis:—Madame de Beauregard is a little too—too puritanical for me. I 'm a sad fellow, and the company of virtuous women makes me perfectly stupid: I can't find a word to say to them. Ever since I have had the honor of visiting the marchioness, I have been obliged to amuse myself by examining the tapestry, and watching the clock, to while away the time;—it was necessary for me to stay; so that you see why she found me so dull and insupportable."

"Don't believe a word he says, de Montal. There are no more deceitful and treacherous fellows in the universe, than your rakes, who pretend to be wholly taken up with low society. We poor husbands know that to our cost; there is no such thing as putting one's wife on her guard against them. If we undertake to reason with them—if we say, 'My dear, do you suppose that such a one, (des Roches for instance,) with all his power to please and fascinate the fashionable and high-bred, confines his addresses to women of no character?' My lady takes fire at once, and without deigning to consider the matter for a moment, replies: 'Pray, what do you take me for, monsieur! Do you mean to insult me?'"

Here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of M. de Montal's valet, who presented a card to his master.

The count read it aloud; the address was 'Le Baron de Ker Ellio.'

"Ah ha! the Chouan, our cousin of Brittany," cried the marquis; "so the wild goose has migrated at last."

"Desire M. de Ker Ellio to do me the honor to walk in," said the count to the servant.

The valet left the room.

"From the country—your friend?" asked Captain des Roches.

"Yes," replied de Montal, smiling, "and this is his first visit to Paris."

"Pardieu! that 's capital!" said the marquis; "he must dine with us to-day."

"To-day, marquis?" said de Montal.

"Yes, this evening. I came here purposely to invite you to dine with me, and I meant to call at your house for the same purpose, Bedouin."

"A thousand pardons, marquis; but you seem to forget—it would seem so odd—the duel this morning——"

"You think it strange, do you? Nevertheless, I choose to give the dinner for reasons of my own; and if you refuse to dine with me, you are no friend of mine."

At this moment the door opened, and M. de Ker Ellio entered.

We trust that the reader has not forgotten that Ewen de Ker Ellio was a man of great simplicity, and great purity of character—thoughtful and abstracted; a dreamer; nay, almost a solitary, and wholly unacquainted with the morals as well as the manners of Parisian life. With all this, the noble spirit, high courage, and great self-possession of our country gentleman, gave him an air of perfect respectability in any presence, though his only tutor had been the ex-dragoon, and now, Abbé de Kerouellan. There was nothing in the personal appearance of Ewen upon which ridicule could fasten; for there was an absence of all pretension. His blue surtout, buttoned tight in the neck, displayed a figure at once athletic and elegant; while his thick, but close cropped hair and beard, and the calm sedate expression of his countenance, gave him a sort of military air, which was almost stern.

In the presence of the high-bred company into which he was thrown, he exhibited neither diffidence nor timidity; nor, on the other hand, was he obliged to affect a roughness of manner, to exhibit the sense of equality which he was conscious of. His simple, frank, and yet courteous address, gave token of an innate nobility of soul, which needs no embellishment from the arts and graces of fashionable life.

As soon as he was announced, M. de Montal advanced, and met the baron with great cordiality. Captain des Roches arose to light a cigar, and the marquis kept his seat upon

the sofa, and fixed his eyes with evident curiosity upon the young Breton.

"I am delighted to see you, my dear cousin," cried the count. "The Abbé de Kerouellan encouraged me to hope for a visit, but he did not authorize me to expect you so soon."

"I did not expect to be here so soon, myself," returned the baron; "but unexpected business——"

"But when did you arrive?"

"A few days since;—a slight indisposition confined me to my room, and prevented me from calling on you sooner."

"The devil take that indisposition; it has deprived me of a very great pleasure," replied de Montal; and then addressing M. de Beauregard, he said: "Marquis, allow me to present to you my kinsman, the Baron de Ker Ellio?"

M. de Beauregard rose and bowed.

"This is my friend Captain des Roches," continued the count, presenting that gentleman to Ewen.

The captain saluted the new comer courteously, and all took their seats.

After a moment's silence, the marquis turned to Ewen, and addressing him with that melange of dignity and cordiality, which so much became him, said:

"Pardieu, monsieur! I am going to take a great liberty with you, which I beg you to excuse. With the proverbial frankness and courtesy of a Breton, your cousin, Captain des Roches, and a few others of my friends, are to honor me with their company at dinner to-day. Will you join us? I can promise to make you acquainted with some of the élite of our Parisian youth—over whom, by virtue of seniority, I claim a sort of right of supervision."

Ewen had too much good taste, to decline this invitation upon the ground of want of acquaintance; and he answered cordially:

"With great pleasure, monsieur! and I am much indebted to my kinsman, to whose kind representations, I doubtless owe the honor of your advances."

"You are right, monsieur. Your kinsman has spoken of you in the highest terms."

"I have said nothing more than you fully deserved, my dear cousin," put in de Montal.

"Really, gentlemen—do you know, that as a Breton, I ought to be simple enough to believe all the flattering things you say of me?"

"We say no more than we mean," replied the marquis; "and to show you, that I am by no means disposed to treat you as a stranger, I shall ask your permission to resume the conversation in which we were engaged, when you arrived?"

"But, marquis!" cried M. de Montal.

"Nay! nay! my good fellow! what more can we say to our new friend? You certainly do not wish to annoy him with the nonsense which it is the vulgar custom to inflict upon all new-comers—such as, 'How do you like Paris? Does it answer your expectation?' &c., frivolities unbecoming us to use, or him to listen to."

"You are perfectly right, monsieur," observed Ewen, laughing. "There is nothing more annoying to me than such common-place, matter-of-course questions, which mean nothing, and require no answer. I thank you, for sparing me the infliction."

"You are a man of sense, monsieur. I was about to tell these gentlemen who they were to meet at dinner to-day. I intend to have half a dozen of the liveliest actresses in Paris."

"Ah ha! marquis; I am certain you could not get along without the women."

"The captain thinks, because I am married, I ought to stay at home always with my wife," observed the marquis gayly. "Apropos," he added, "I trust that you will allow me to present you to Madame de Beauregard. She receives company every Wednesday."

"You do me too much honor, monsieur," replied Ewen, bowing profoundly.

"I tell you beforehand, monsieur, that the marchioness is but eighteen years of age, and lovely as an angel;—so beware how you fall in love with her; for the captain is as jealous as a tiger. He wont admit it, but it is so, nevertheless."

"M. de Ker Ellio, I trust you will not permit the marquis to mislead you. He is bent upon quizzing me to-day. The truth is, that I am so sad a rake, that a lady of the lofty character of Madame de Beauregard is an object of dread to me. I am disconcerted when in her presence, and I am unable to show her the attentions her rank and accomplishments require; and upon that account it is, that the marquis rallies me so unsparingly."

"Never mind what he says," rejoined the marquis, addressing Ewen; "I tell you to look out for Captain des Roches, if you find yourself moved to pay any particular attentions to my wife. There is another gentleman also, who is very much devoted to the marchioness. I mean M. Labirinte, though I hardly know whether he should be considered a very formidable rival. What say you, des Roches?"

"What a devil of a fellow you are, marquis," replied the captain. "However, if I was much interested in the prospects of the adorers of Madame de Beauregard, I should consider M. Labirinte's pretensions by no means to be despised. Why, he is a young poet—as fresh and blooming as a rose—besides which he is a deputy, and the right-arm man of the minister, Roupi Gobillon, the intimate friend of de Montal."

"You must excuse that name, monsieur," said the marquis, to Ewen. "I was afraid you would think des Roches had made use of a vulgar expression; but that is what the fellow calls himself. One would suppose it was

bad enough to be named *Roupi*—the addition of Gobillon is positively indecent."

"No doubt he thinks it is very fine, notwithstanding," said Ewen, laughing.

"Pardieu! monsieur, there 's nothing more probable. It is evidently the illegitimate offspring of the aristocratic pride of a democratic lawyer;—the same sort of feeling that induces M. Labirinte to write sonnets to the marchioness, while he is dabbling in politics. Ah! des Roches, there the deputy has the advantage of you. You are in the service of the country—he in the government. Now, women are always fond of power, and of course of people in power."

"Come, come, marquis," observed de Montal, "let us change the subject."

"Agreed, my fine fellow. I know it is in very bad taste, for me to set these rivals together by the ears. But, now for the actresses, whom we are to have to dine with us. In the first place, there is Mademoiselle Emma, and her sister, Herminie. Emma," said the marquis, turning to Ewen, "is a very distinguished danseuse, belonging to the ballet of the opera:—her sister, who is nearly her equal, leads the business of one of the minor theatres. I patronize them both; and I shall bring them to-night, for your especial benefit—so that upon your entrée into Parisan life, you may have your choice of good society, or bad. By good, I mean, of course, Madame de Beauregard; by bad, such as des Roches affects—Emma and her sister, for instance."

"And what other ladies, marquis, shall we have?" asked de Montal.

"Serpentine, for one—the wittiest, and at the same time, the most malignant of her sex."

"A promising name," remarked Ewen, smiling.

"Oh! that is only a soubriquet," said M. de Montal; "her real name is Adele Clermont. Her intelligence, as to all that is going on in the gay world, is only equalled by her reckless exposure of all she knows, regardless of feelings or consequences."

"As handsome as an angel! and as wicked as the devil!" observed des Roches.

"And then, continued the marquis, we will have Clara Duval; who, by the way of contrariety, we have named Clarissa Harlowe, because, in point of gayety and frolic, she is the very antipodes of that sorrowful lady; the fair Greek, who is the most beautiful of all our theatrical belles, with Mademoiselle Rosa and her sister; who, though all talkers, are charming to look upon, and these will complete the female portion of our company."

"And what gentlemen, marquis?"

"What gentlemen? why we must have the admirers of the ladies, of course. Saint Luce, for Serpentine; Baudricourt, for the fair Greek; Fitz Herald for Clarissa Harlowe; then Major Brown, the Duke de Serda, Prince Castelli, and that is all;—no, I had forgotten, there is an M. Florés, an American, a cousin of my wife, a young Iowa, as I call him; it is his first entrance into society, and we will try to make him open his eyes to night."

"And me also, marquis?" said Ewen, smiling.

"By no means, M. le Baron," replied the marquis, with admirable tact; "there is a great difference between you,—my cousin will stare—you will observe—my cousin will listen and wonder—you will hear and understand:" then rising, he said to de Montal, at half-past seven. You understand?"

"But where, marquis?"

"At the Rocher de Cancale, of course,—where would you have a married man dine his unmarried acquaintance?" then turning to Ewen, he added: "You will be very much disappointed with our fashionable cabarets. I wish we could bring one from London,—the Clarendon hotel, with all its comforts and conveniences; but, alas! we have nothing to set off against the magnificent public houses of England, except tolerable cheer and pretty girls,—you can—you must make all allowances, will you not? and permit me hereafter, to endeavor to mend your fare at my own house, where I shall have the honor to present you to Madame de Beauregard. Au revoir, de Montal. Where are you going, des Roches? shall I set you down anywhere?"

"I have a game of tennis to play with Saint Luce this morning, at the passage Cendrier," replied the captain.

"Very well, I' ll leave you there."

Saluting Ewen very cordially, M. de Beauregard, with des Roches, took their leave for the tennis-court.

"How do you like the marquis?" asked de Montal of his cousin, when the company had departed.

"I have often heard my father speak of the great lords of the anciene régime; of their wit and humor—their gayety, and the levity with which they regarded their matrimonial ties; and I think M. de Beauregard is a very fair specimen of them. He is certainly a very agreeable man, and seems in especial good-humor to day."

"You would hardly suppose that he had killed a man in a duel, this morning."

"He!" cried Ewen; "and this evening he gives an entertainment!"

"It does not seem quite correct, I admit," replied de Montal; "but still there is some excuse for it. The man he slew was a sort of bravo; little less than an assassin, whom no body regrets, but whom every one is indebted to the marquis for putting out of the way; he was a standing nuisance in Paris. Besides, the marquis said he had reasons of his own, for giving the dinner to-day, and as he was so pressing, I could not refuse him; and you had better go with me."

"I cannot well do otherwise," said Ewen, "now that I have accepted his invitation."

"The marquis must have taken some strange fancy into his head, for it is five or six years since he left off fighting duels. But where do you lodge, baron? If you wish, I will call for you on my way to this dinner."

"Do so; I shall be much obliged to you. I have taken apartments at the hotel du Croissant, rue Montmartel; and now I want to ask you a question, which will make you laugh. How shall I dress for this bachelor dinner? For, as I go under your auspices, I should be sorry to give you cause to blush for the awkwardness of my costume," said Ewen smiling.

"Oh! as to that—dress as simply as you please; only exchange your frock for a dress coat. And now, I hope you find your affairs here in a situation which will require your attention for some time yet?"

"Why, as to that, my business is finished already, and without any trouble either. I sent by the Abbé de Kerouellan, when he came to Paris, a draft upon my banker, M. Achille Dunoyer."

"M. Achille Dunoyer!" exclaimed de Montal.

"Yes; do you know him?"

"Very well, indeed," replied the count; "but go on."

"Well; the good abbé, ignorant as a child about business matters, never dreamed that the banker had an office, but called at his house;—it so happened, that the banker had gone to his villa, and hearing from the servant that he was in the country, and had left no directions in regard to my draft—my worthy friend took the alarm at once, and hastened to inform me that the large sum I had in M. Dunoyer's hands was in great danger; inasmuch as that gentleman had left the city, and made no provision to meet my draft."

"Strange!" said M. de Montal, with involuntary emotion. "M. Dunoyer's property is known to be immense, and his house one of the safest in the country."

"So every one tells me; and what is more, when I called on M. Dunoyer this morning, he explained the mistake, and not only cashed my draft, but offered to pay at once the whole amount of my deposit with him."

M. de Montal was evidently relieved, and answered, "Still I am surprised that such a mistake should have occurred."

"Oh! it was the abbé's simplicity and ignorance of business. I have everywhere had such favorable accounts of M. Dunoyer's responsibility, that I have, already, replaced the sum I drew, and for which I had no longer occasion, upon deposit with him."

"You are right; you could not invest it more securely. M. Dunoyer is a very wealthy man; his real estate is estimated at more than two millions—besides his out-standing debts, and the capital of his banking-house. He was assessed, upon the last year's books, at four millions two hundred and sixty thousand francs."

"Why, you seem to be very intimately acquainted with his affairs! I ought to have applied to you for information."

"Oh! I merely repeat what I have heard," replied the count, coloring slightly.

"He seems to me," continued Ewen, "a very courteous and hospitable man—he invited me to dine with him next Sunday."

"Next Sunday!" repeated de Montal, "that is capital! I dine there myself next Sunday."

"Then I am truly fortunate. But I must leave you now;—good-bye, then, my dear fellow."

"Good-bye—do n't forget to call for me this evening," said Ewen, shaking his kinsman heartily by the hand.

Thus, we have fairly embarked Ewen de Ker Ellio upon the boisterous sea of Parisian life. That he bore himself so well and manfully must be attributed equally to the natural hardihood of his character, and the sound and sensible education which had been bestowed upon him by his instructor, the ex-dragoon. His mind, which in the gloom of solitude and revery, had for the moment seemed to lose its equilibrium, speedily recovered its balance, when he came in contact with the realities of active life during his journey; and, since his arrival in Paris, sober reflection and external observation, had taken the place of those wild and dangerous dreams in which his soul had been wrapped, by day as well as by night, while immured at Treff Hartlog; and he could even laugh at the imaginary terror of the mysterious portrait. There was something unaccountable in its presence still; but no longer anything supernatural or ominous of ill, and the pale and sombre beauty which it depicted, began to fade from the tablet of his mind, and give place to the image of the buxom nut-brown and mirthful maiden, whom the abbé was to provide as his partner on his return. When he reached his lodgings, Ewen wrote a cheerful letter to his old instructor—sent some kind messages to his old servants, and prepared for his dinner engagement. When the count called for him on his way to the Rocher de Cancale, he found his country kinsman simply, but very neatly attired, in a blue coat, white vest, and pantaloons of black; and thus accoutred, he departed.

CHAPTER XIII.

LE ROCHER DE CANCALE.

When Ewen and M. de Montal entered the room appropriated to the guests of the marquis, that personage had not yet made his appearance; but they found Captain des Roches in conversation with his rival, M. Labirinte, as M. de Beauregard chose to call him.

M. Labirinte, the poetical deputy, was a doctrinaire in politics; in person, he was delicate, with a pretty face, and a complexion which changed color at any new emotion, like that of a young girl. Too timid to speak before the Chamber, he vindicated with much smartness the policy of the ministers, under the especial auspices and protection of M. Roupi Gobillon.

Another of the guests present, was Major Brown, a Hanoverian officer, who had acquired great reputation from the extravagance of his bets, which he almost always gained, particularly when that could be done by display of reckless daring. In England, especially, he was regarded with unbounded admiration, since his performance of one feat, the rashness of which surpassed belief. The major was on board Lord Fitz Herald's pleasure yacht, which was scudding before the wind on the open sea. The gale was violent, and a sudden gust carried away his hat.

"You have lost your hat," exclaimed his lordship, pointing to the unfortunate chapeau, which was floating upon the crest of a wave far to windward.

"I'll bet you a hundred louis, I have not!" returned the major.

"Done!" responded his lordship, "an hundred it is!"

Upon the word, the major plunged into the sea. He swam like a dolphin; but he was encumbered by his dress. After incredible exertion, and at an appalling risk, he succeeded in regaining his hat, and putting it upon his head in triumph. His lordship was astounded at his temerity, but had the presence of mind to put the yacht about at once; and this manœuvre dexterously executed, and aided by the use of sweeps, brought the vessel near the swimmer, before he was entirely exhausted, and he was handed on board alive.

Exploits of this description had made the major a real *lion*. He was still young, of good figure, and had a countenance expressive of energy and intrepidity.

The next guests who arrived were, the Prince Castelli and the Duke de Serda.

The prince was a Florentine nobleman of high rank, who had been exiled as a Carbonaro. In appearance, he was worthy of the age of the Medici. He was elegant, accomplished, and gay. An ardent lover of liberty —a conspirator without rancor—he had a hundred times risked his head, with as much indifference as if it were nothing worth. This gallant and chivalrous prince seemed to belong to another age; his air and bearing were worthy of the magnificent costume in which Titian used to depict the great lords of his day, when, with their ladies upon their arms, they strode majestically upon the terraces of their marble palaces, which, in their turn, were thrown into strong relief by the deep blue sky of the back-ground.

The prince was at once a composer and a musician; and when the brilliant lights of a festal party paled before the first dawn of day, his voice might often be heard, as it rung out, in its notes both sweet and clear, what might pass for Nature's song to the morning.

The prince, too, by virtue of his adventures, his wit, and his preëminent talent, might also be considered a veritable lion. In fact, except M. Labirinte and Ewen, almost all the guests whom the marquis had invited were remarkable men.

The Duke de Serda, marquis of Bonavista, and a grandee of Spain, had established a great range of stables in Normandy, upon which he lavished enormous sums. His stock had already distinguished itself, by taking the purses at Chantilly, and the Champ de Mars. He it was, who first introduced into France the practice of driving race-horses in harness; and if all these things did not make him a lion, what could? In person the duke was a true Spaniard, thin, and of a sallow complexion, with the auburn hair which Velasquez bestows upon his portraits. He was grave and silent, and of a very lordly demeanor, notwithstanding his slight stature.

The next arrival was that of the Count de Saint Luce, still more of a *lion* in the world of fashion than any who had preceded him. This young nobleman worthily represented in the Chamber of Peers, the youth of the empire. In the august assembly of which he was a member, he was always listened to with respect, and sometimes with the deepest interest. The Count de Saint Luce possessed the faculty of speaking concisely and to the point. His wit was pointed and elegant, his irony cutting, and his sarcasm severe. He possessed great tact; his patriotism was undoubted, and his contempt for mercenary politicians unbounded. His great pretension to the character of a lion, however, consisted in the facility with which this really energetic and talented legislator could transform himself into the man of fashion and ton, the humorist, the bon-vivant, or the rake.

When a man of acknowledged talent is placed in a situation of serious responsibility, if he is ever and at all times serious in his deportment, he may be respected; but he must be a very tiresome companion. For a man, by nature frivolous and gay, to be always frivolous and gay, is no marvel; but for a great man to be at once brilliant in the senate-house and at the festive board—for him to foil, with the same ease, the prince, minister, and the bacchanal, at their own weapons—for him, in fine, to be the greatest everywhere, and in every various and opposite capacity—displays a remarkable mind indeed.

Another guest, M. Baudricourt, was remarkable for his love of play, and still more so for the extraordinary size of his stakes. It was nothing unusual for him to risk four or five thousand louis upon a single point; and

whenever, as sometimes happened, a foreign gambler of great courage and immense resources made his appearance in Paris, he was told at once, "Baudricourt is your man;" and in Baudricourt he inevitably found his match. Play was the business of this man's life, and as a business, it furnished him with the means of living; he was supposed to lay by from his winnings, some sixty or eighty thousand francs per annum; and he always had by him, for immediate use, double that amount with which to encounter the strongest competitor. The great secret of his success was this; he avoided all games of chance—confined himself to those of skill, and played with wonderful coolness and dexterity.

Lord Fitz Herald had his own peculiar tastes, but his passion was for flowers. His collection of plants would have vied with that of the Duke of Devonshire; he had gardeners and florists constantly travelling in Asia, Africa, and America, who were continually sending him the tropical flowers, and fruits and shrubs, in steamers fitted up as hothouses. His conservatory was wonderful; he had apartments, the temperature of which he graduated to the wants of all his vegetable favorites;—and from one which he called the department of Magellan, and which he kept heated to the height of some 120 Farenheit, he was one day brought out in a state of asphyxia; having been nearly suffocated to death by an atmosphere like that which proceeds the typhoon of India.

M. de Beauregard's cousin, M. Alonzo Florés, was a young American, remarkable for nothing but his curly black hair and great white teeth, which he displayed unceasingly.

Such were the gentlemen of the party; of the ladies, there only were present Serpentine, Clarissa, and Cora, sometimes called the fair Greek. Serpentine was a straight figure, slender and graceful; her complexion was of a clear brown, her features admirably cut; but her wicked black eyes, her close prim mouth, and a scarcely perceptible, though constant knitting of the brow, announced a mischievous disposition which she was by no means slow in exhibiting.

Clarissa was a blonde with golden hair, and eyes of heaven's own blue; her sweet round face full of gayety and smiles, her well developed form, her sprightly step and her unbounded flow of spirits, were but little in keeping with the character of the melancholy heroine, whose name had been so ironically bestowed upon her.

For Cora, the fair Greek, let the Venus of Milo descend from her pedestal in all her magnificence—give her locks of the deepest jet, but let her retain for the rest all the whiteness, and at the same time, the impassiveness of marble, and you have before you this lovely but heartless being.

It is unnecessary to say that these ladies were attired in the best of taste, and exhibited all the elegant simplicity which characterizes the Parisian women of fashion.

They now awaited the arrival only of the marquis and Mademoiselle Rosa and Herminie. So well were his habits known to his guests, however, that no surprise was manifested at his delay; but all amused themselves in talking of his duel in the morning. The sanguinary reputation of Colonel Koller, had made him an object of universal detestation; so dreaded was his ferocity, that the news of his death was received as if it were the tidings of universal deliverance.

Suddenly, the noise of two carriages was heard. It was the marquis in his chariot, and his fair friends in one of their own. M. de Beauregard was ever careful of appearances, and he purposely so contrived it, that their meeting might seem accidental,—but he awaited the presence of the fair sisters, in order to enable him to make the triumphal entry he had determined upon. The doors were thrown open with great ceremony by the maitre d'hotel, and the marquis appeared with the two fair sisters upon his arms.

Pardon us, gentle reader, if we trespass upon your patience so far, as to devote a few lines to the description of the very striking tableau presented by this sudden apparition of the master of the revels. M. de Beauregard, as we have before mentioned, was a man of lofty stature and lordly presence. In the morning he had been attired with the greatest simplicity; but, on the present occasion, he had given the reins to his fantastic imagination, and burst upon his expecting guests in a costume so gorgeous, that no one except a man of his undisputed pretensions to fashion and good taste, could have exhibited it without exposing himself to the imputation of foppery and extravagance.

His coat was of sky-blue, decorated with buttons of solid gold, chased with exquisite art, and adorned with the star and insignia belonging to his rank; his open vest of brown velvet, embroidered with silver, fastened with studs of oriential rubies, left exposed a bosom and frills of the most costly lace-work secured by rubies and pearls of still greater magnificence, and of immense value; around his neck was a cravat of snow-white muslin, fringed with lace; his close-fitting pantaloons of the finest black kerseymere, seemed to merge into hose embellished with clock-work of silver; and his feet, of aristocratic dimensions, were shod with low-quartered pumps of extreme lightness and brilliant polish. On each side of him was one of the sisters, Rosa and Herminie, dressed in the extreme of female elegance and fashion; their ivory shoulders bare, and their eyes sparkling with dazzling brightness, each holding in her hand a bouquet of the most costly exotics. An involuntary murmur of admiration greeted his appearance—to which he responded, by a start of waggish surprise. Upon the announcement of dinner, which al-

most immediately succeeded, he led the way to the saloon. But a close observer would have perceived, that there was a degree of unnatural excitement in his almost boisterous gayety; a feverish impatience accompanied his mirthful greetings, and his hilarity, to one who could read the heart, from the occasional expression which flitted across his countenance, would have seemed to be mingled with something of the terrible.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DINNER.

For the sake of convenience, we shall give our report of this entertainment in dramatic form, and commence with a tableau of the personages present, and their various positions.

Scene—A lofty saloon, through the length of which runs a table, richly covered with plate and chrystal, which reflects the light of some hundreds of waxen candles of various hues; in the centre of the table stands an enormous vase of Dresden china, full of the most exquisite exotics, presented by Lord Fitz Herald.

The marquis is seated midway on one side of the table; on his right is placed the Prince Castelli, as a stranger; on his left, the Baron de Ker Ellio, as a new acquaintance; opposite him, Mademoiselle Serpentine; these three seats (which had been reserved by order of M. de Beauregard,) once occupied, the remainder of the guests took their places as suited their inclinations. Rosa sat on the right of M. de Ker Ellio; Herminie upon the left of the Prince Castelli; on either side of Cora, the fair Greek, was a vacant place; but M. Labirinte and M. Florés, to whom these most enviable positions were left, had, unfortunately, reached the door of the saloon at the same moment, and each one being too polite to take the precedence of the other, they stood bowing one to another like two China mandarins, until Cora, observing their unhappy predicament, arose and extricated them, by taking an arm of each and leading them to the table.

Now, that all were seated and the process of dining fully commenced, M. Labirinte fancied that he observed the noble marquis, from time to time, cast a glance of very peculiar expression upon Captain des Roches and himself; he felt uneasy. The recollection of the death of Col. Koller, by the hand of the marquis, that very morning, flashed across his mind; his appetite was gone, and he most heartily regretted that he had accepted the invitation to the feast.

Ewen also perceived, that some strange emotion was pent up within the heart of M. de Beauregard; for, although that gentleman was outwardly the beau-ideal of a master of the revels, he perceived that his knees, with which he accidentally came in contact beneath the table, trembled with convulsive violence. The remainder of those present seemed to enjoy themselves with entire freedom. The conversation, by degrees, became general and animated; and at this period it is, that we take it up.

"What made you keep us waiting so long, marquis?" asked Serpentine; "were you making love to your wife?"

Marquis. My wife! I've not seen her these three days. How is my wife, M. Labirinte?

M. Labirinte, (*coloring deeply.*) I have not had the honor to see madame, the marchioness, since—(*here he feigned a fit of coughing, to conceal his embarrassment*)—since—for several days—ahem—I—I have been very much occupied in the Chamber—(*here he coughed again, and drank a glass of water.*)

Serpentine. Ah! is it possible I have the honor of seeing M. Labirinte—M. Labirinte, the celebrated *doctrinaire?*

Labirinte, (*flattered.*) I am M. Labirinte—ahem—the deputy—but as to my celebrity——

Serpentine. Monsieur, excuse me; I cannot look upon you but with the most infinite respect—the most profound veneration, permit me to say.

Marquis. Respect and veneration—on what account? Come, let us know, my girl; there's some mischief at the bottom of this, I'll engage.

Serpentine. Is it possible, marquis, that you ask? Is it possible that you are ignorant of the story about M. Labirinte and M. des Roches?

Marquis. What story?

Labirinte, (*coloring with embarrassment, but still flattered.*) Ahem—mademoiselle—really, now, mademoiselle——

A Number of Voices. The story, Serpentine; come, give us the story.

Serpentine. Oh! it would hardly be proper, just now.

Baudricourt. So much the better; out with it.

Marquis. And do n't gloss it over; that would be so much the worse.

Labirinte, (*who has now become very much disturbed.*) Oh! I know what mademoiselle refers to, now; but it is all a piece of pure invention, not a word of truth in it;—is there, des Roches?

Des Roches, (*laughing.*) I do n't know about that; I suspect it is founded upon truth, at least;—come, Serpentine.

Serpentine. Well, then, I'll tell you what has made me conceive such a profound veneration for M. Labirinte. Know, then, (*assuming a tragic air and tone,*) that if his country were to be called to mourn the loss of that interesting doctrinaire, his grave would, like that of a young maiden, be covered with garlands and flowers. Yes, and his chin should be draped with a snow-white mort-cloth, and

his hearse be decorated with plumes of the same unsullied hue.

SAINT LUCE. Why, what do you mean by that? Labirinte is a man, is he not?

SERPENTINE. Did I say he was not? No; but I do say, that his modesty and his ignorance of the ways of this wicked world, are worthy of a virgin in her teens. Listen! not long since, the charming simplicity which beams from the brow of this interesting young statesman, subdued the heart of some lady of high rank and great beauty, who preserves a mysterious incognito. Of her love, the fair unknown made no secret; but how to make the adequate return, though well disposed, was a problem too difficult to be solved by our amiable friend. In his immaculate purity of heart, he had never imagined the necessity of acquiring the art of love-making; his diffidence deprived him of the ability even to make the effort. So what does he do but go to des Roches for advice, and put himself under his tuition—and a very capable instructer he selected, too, I've no doubt. (*The company all laugh, excepting Labirinte, who is nearly overcome.*)

MARQUIS. Capital, capital that; and it is really true, is it, des Roches?

SERPENTINE. Now, do you tell us the name of the lady, Des Roches.

DES ROCHES. That is impossible. M. Labirinte is discretion itself; he never even revealed the name to me his professor—(*aside,*) If he was not such a d—d fool, I could give a shrewd guess. For some days——

SAINT LUCE. It is to be hoped that, under such an able guide, M. Labirinte may become as distinguished a rake as he is a statesman.

DE MONTAL. And that is hoping a good deal; for, as a politician, M. Labirinte is the right arm of my friend Roupi Gobillon.

CLARISSA. Roupi Gobillon. Ah! that is the fat minister, who has such a hang-dog look.

DE MONTAL. Well, if he has a hanging look, it cannot be denied that he came honestly by it; he caught it of his clients whom he had to defend in the assizes, when he was practicing as an advocate.

MARQUIS. Where the devil did you ever meet M. Roupi Gobillon, Clarissa?

CLARISSA. Here. He had requested Dorville, one of his friends, to get up an entertainment and invite some of the stars of the ballet! but when the time came, the poor man was so alarmed lest his wife should hear of it, that he lost all relish for his dinner. It was nothing but—'What would my wife say, for Heavens sake! do not let her hear of it!' (*to Dorville*) and oh, if she only knew!——

MAJOR BROWN. His wife is a lady of high pretensions, then?

MARQUIS. Pardieu! I believe you—she wears the Cordon Blue.

PRINCE CASTELLI. How, the Cordon Blue? does she belong then to some foreign order of nobility?

MARQUIS. My dear prince, the minister's lady, before her marriage, belonged to the domestic order of the *Scullery*.

PRINCE. How! what mean you?

MARQUIS. Simply, that M. Roupi Gobillon when an advocate, married his cook. Nevertheless, it is due to her to say, that in the situation in which this august couple have accidently been placed, the lady of skillets and skewers is by no means the most embarrassed of the two.

DE MONTAL, (*laughing.*) Well—you are in a fair way to run my good friend to earth.

SAINT LUCE. It is a fine game certainly, and our game is just served.

SERPENTINE. I trust there is no similarity in the condition of the two.

MARQUIS. Come, come; do not be so hard. How do you know, but in marrying his cook-maid the minister intended to be symbolical, and express his wish, that every citizen under his administration might have a chicken in his pot; as good king Henry Quartre used to say?

DUKE DE SERDA. Is this M Roupi Gobillon a man of any merit?

MARQUIS. Of none in the world—a trickish attorney, with the air of a pedant, though in point of fact an ignoramus; his sole ability a sort of tact in managing low political intrigues, in which he is much aided by what he calls his *civil* courage, which means the faculty of submitting to all sorts of abuse and outrage to gain his point—a qualification which, in my judgment, embraces not much, either of civility or courage.

MAJOR BROWN. How did such a man become minister?

MARQUIS. You had best ask M. Labirinte, he is one of those who make and unmake ministers, and he ought to be able to explain the process by which they are manufactured.

M. LABIRINTE, (*blushing and embarrassed.*) The majority representing the opinion of the country. The chiefs of this majority——have—of this country——

SAINT LUCE. Come, come, my dear Labirinte, you know well enough that the majority had nothing to do with the elevation of M. Roupi Gobillon; on the contrary——

M. LABIRINTE. I have the honor to say to the noble peer——

SAINT LUCE. We are all peers here M. Labirinte, in presence of the ladies; is it not so, Clarissa?

CLARISSA. What! Peers of France?

SAINT LUCE. No—peers in mirth and good fellowship; peers in your affection and esteem, my girls. But to return to M. Roupi Gobillon, and answer the major's question—the process by which he was made minister was curious enough; it occurred to him and some other deputies, of no fixed principles in politics or anything else, that the two great

parties were so equally divided, that a dozen votes, one way or the other, would secure to either the predominance in the councils of the State: so, watching well their opportunity, they proffered to both, in a time of need, their influence and voice, for an adequate compensation:—they were purchased at an extravagant rate; and M. Roupi Gobillon, as the projector and negotiator of the bargain and sale, received the highest price, a seat in the cabinet—his dozen of coadjutors were provided for in subordinate situations.

Marquis. And thus the pettifogging attorney, and his wife the cook, came to be employed to dish up matters of state! Mon Dieu! what a country!

Serpentine. It must be very pleasant to you, de Montal, to hear your dear friend and patron, who has offered you so many offices, since you run through your estate, made the subject of so much eulogium.

De Montal. Please to recollect, mademoiselle, that, whatever M. Roupi Gobillon offered, I have accepted nothing at his hands; and, in preserving my independence, I am free to laugh at him.

Serpentine. I beg your pardon, monsieur; you have the right to laugh at him; but I am afraid that is all you have.

Clarissa. And take care, my poor, dear fellow, that, in attempting to imitate the marquis, you are not, after all, reduced to accept anything M. Roupi Gobillon may offer, to make up for the money you are throwing away.

De Montal, (*irritated, but constraining himself.*) In imitating the marquis! Well, I admit it—I have striven to imitate him, and I am proud of it—I have succeeded pretty well, too; have I not, Beauregard?

Marquis. Oh! famously, no doubt, my dear fellow; I am proud of such a follower; only you must permit me to say, that you put rather too much alloy in your counterfeit coin: for instance, when you would play the Grand Suzerain, instead of throwing away a hundred gold louis, you dispense the amount in copper; and hence you ruin yourself like a shop-keeper, rather than like a gentleman.

De Montal, (*forcing a laugh.*) You are severe, marquis.

Clarissa. You are right, marquis; and that is, doubtless, the reason that Julie refused the hand of this dealer in coppers, as her aunt Savageot says she did.

De Montal, (*evidently piqued.*) Come, now, my child, that is an old story.

Serpentine. But tell us, de Montal, did Julie use to allow you ten louis a month to buy your gloves?

De Montal, (*constraining his rage with difficulty.*) You slanderer!

Clarissa. Oh! that is a calumny, a base calumny! I'll answer for it; Julie was too stingy to do that.

De Montal, (*to Serpentine.*) Do you hear that?

Serpentine. Yes, I think it very likely: de Montal is held very cheap by the theatrical belles, now that he has been obliged to fall back upon the women of fashion.

Des Roches. Ah! now she has got upon the ladies of fashion! we shall hear something smart now.

Serpentine. Right; and that puts me in mind of an adventure of the Duchess de Mirepont——

Baudricourt. Take care, take care, Serpentine; the Duchess de Mirepont is a cousin of mine.

Serpentine. Ah! I was speaking of little de Sainval's mistress.

Baudricourt. Nevertheless she is my cousin, you must recollect.

Serpentine. How, your cousin?

Baudricourt. Why, she is my uncle's daughter.

Serpentine. Oh! then she is the daughter of Madame de Montfort. I know well enough the respect due to ladies of rank; but I was not speaking of the daughter of your aunt, certainly not of the daughter of your unfortunate uncle, if you choose to consider her so. I was only adverting to the affections of de Sainval.

Baudricourt. Very pretty, that, indeed; (*aside*) the mischievous viper!

Marquis, (*To Ewen de Ker Ellio*). Monsieur, upon my honor, I am afraid you will form a strange opinion of our Parisian society.

Ewen. Indeed, monsieur, I must freely confess that I am at a loss what to think of it.

Serpentine. Very complimentary, that, Monsieur le Breton. I should think you might say something more gallant of us than that.

Ewen. Then I will say, madam, that I think you very amiable.

Saint Luce. And very free spoken, you might as well have added. A queer world, this; one day a child, then a disbeliever in the existence of virtue.

Prince Castelli. Faith, I have always found the world much better than it has credit for being.

Marquis. My dear prince, you will have to think of the world as Orpheus did of the ferocity of tigers, or as Don Juan did of the virtue of women: easily overcome, if you only use the proper means.

Baudricourt. Marquis, you must not believe anything Serpentine says of the Duchess de Mirepont.

Marquis. My dear fellow, if what she says is not true, it must be very strange. I can tell you a story of a married woman, which will beat all she can say of the duchess.

Serpentine. Marquis, talking of marriage, I know of no one who wears the yoke more easily than you do, although your friends were very solicitous on your account.

Fitz Herald. The fact is, marquis, that for

three weeks, it was the topic of universal conversation. I was in London, and I know that three thousand guineas were bet in one day, that the report was false.

PRINCE CASTELLI. I was at Milan, and it was just so there. The women were in extacies. 'What! the Marquis de Beauregard married!' they exclaimed; 'then the sex is revenged!' for I must tell you, that your reputation in Italy is that of a *mauvais sujet*.

SAINT LUCE. Marriage! marriage! why, it is the lot of all good fellows at last; they deceive, and in their turn must be deceived.

MARQUIS. Well, my dear fellow, which do you think is the most amusing: to deceive, or to be deceived?

SAINT LUCE. Faith, I hardly know; there is a charm in both categories, to you men of fashion.

CLARISSA. A charm! what is it, pray?

SAINT LUCE. Why, if he is deceived, he has a chance of displaying the most sublime generosity; and we all know what a charm there is in deceiving others.

MARQUIS. I have a problem for you to solve: A woman has a lover——

CLARISSA. Most women have.

MARQUIS. She is unfaithful——

SERPENTINE. Most women are.

MARQUIS. Whose position is the most flattering, the first lover's or the second one's?

BAUDRICOURT. That is no question at all. The new lover is the most complimented, of course.

MARQUIS. No; the old one, by all means.

MAJOR BROWN. How! the discarded one?

MARQUIS. Certainly—for observe, the second is only a successor; and it is not in love as in nobility, where every additional quartering adds to the dignity of the blazonry.

SAINT LUCE. But still he is discarded.

DE MONTAL. But he has been preferred, and thus has crossed the flower in its freshness.

MARQUIS. Observe how light this devil of a de Montal makes of being discarded. However, gentlemen—I am about to cite an exple, and you must settle the question.

A NUMBER OF VOICES. How—what is it?—explain.

MARQUIS. There are a pair of us present in this predicament—hear the facts and then let us have your opinions:

[The guests regard each other with inquiring looks; and the perspiration stands on the brow of M. Labirinte.]

SERPENTINE. Who are the two?

MARQUIS. Des Roches and M. Labirinte.

DES ROCHES, (*struggling with concealed emotion.*) Ha! ha! marquis! and which am I?—the discarded, or the new lover. (*aside*) What can he mean?—his strange pleasantries, this morning—the embarrassment of Labirinte?

MARQUIS. Alas! for you, my poor des Roches! You must thank de Montal for the consolation he has preached to the discarded it behooves you to lay it to your soul!

DES ROCHES, (*with feigned indifference.*) At least, then, I should like to know the lady in whose favor M. Labirinte has supplanted me.

MARQUIS, (*drawing a letter from his pocket, and throwing it to des Roches.*) In the favor of the lady to whom you wrote all these sweet things.

DES ROCHES, (*aside, upon examining the superscription.*) Mon Dieu!—his wife!—he knows all—we must fight! (*aloud.*) I understand, marquis. What is to be done?

MARQUIS. Faith, my poor des Roches, if I were in your case, I should take it as philosophically as possible! We must have our bad luck as well as our good.

SERPENTINE, (*bursting into a hearty laugh.*) Mon Dieu!—if it should turn out, that the mysterious unknown was the beloved of des Roches himself!

CLARISSA, (*laughing.*) You have guessed it.

SAINT LUCE, (*in a whisper to Baudricourt.*) How pale des Roches has turned!—there is something serious to come yet.

MARQUIS. And you, my dear M. Labirinte, (*throwing him a letter*) do you recognize this hand-writing?

LABIRINTE, (*turning it over mechanically, and muttering to himself in terror.*) 'Tis true, then—one of my letters to his wife. It is all over with me. I am between the hammer and the anvil—on one side Des Roches, on the other the marquis;—and this morning he killed that fire-eater, Koller. (*aloud, and stammering.*) I—I—I do n't exactly know this writing.

MARQUIS. Oh! examine it closely, my dear fellow!

SERPENTINE. I see it all, marquis;—come, be quick and tell us the name of this fair lady. It must be des Roches'——

DES ROCHES, (*imploringly.*) Now, marquis—not one word more, I entreat you.

MARQUIS, (*gayly.*) What! is not this innocent young doctrinaire your pupil?—his success is yours, my dear fellow.

DES ROCHES, (*losing his patience.*) This is too ridiculous. I cannot submit to be made a laughing-stock. Beauregard, I must insist that you carry this joke no farther.

MARQUIS, (*gayly.*) Why, it seems to move you famously. Now, gentlemen, you are about to behold M. Labirinte in a new character:—hitherto he has appeared only as the statesman; wait till you hear that letter read, and you will see the Don Juan peeping out from beneath his mantle.

LABIRINTE, (*trying to appear gay.*) Oh, I demand a private investigation!—private, private! marquis; I've no taste for this sort of display. (*aside.*) The blood freezes in my veins!—what glances he throws upon me!

MARQUIS. M. Labirinte is generous, des Roches; he wishes to spare the feelings of

his instructor;—but I shall not follow his example.

LABIRINTE, (*aside.*) That infernal marquis!—now he is exciting des Roches against me. (*aloud.*) I hasten to bear testimony to the brilliant qualities of M. des Roches; I assure him, that if I appear to have abused the advice which he did me the honor——

DES ROCHES, (*sternly.*(Spare your compliments, monsieur. (*to the mrquis.*) My lord, I entreat you—I conjure you to give over this ill-timed raillery.

MARQUIS. My dear fellow, you are too susceptible by half, and there is nothing more ill-timed than this display of your susceptibility before company. You seem marvellously discomfited, because M. Labirinte has gathered the sprig of myrtle which you intended to weave into your own chaplet.

DES ROCHES, (*angrily.*) Once more, marquis, enough!

MARQUIS. Really, my dear fellow; you are losing your temper. I beg you to compose yourself.

DES ROCHES, (*drpping his head in confusion.*) I am at his mercy.

MARQUIS, (*taking out another letter, and reading it.*) Listen to the terms in which the faithless fair one speaks of our poor Bedouin, "*I will be frank with you, my Fortunë,*" that is M. Labirinte's given name, you know.

SERPENTINE. He looks as if it ought to be just now.

MARQUIS, (*reading.*) "*Yes, my Fortunë, I loved, or rather thought I loved, M. des Roches.*"

DES ROCHES, (*aside.*) Dolores has deceived me basely, then, and for the sake of yonder simpleton; and I—I must bear all this—but, (*aloud,*) M. le Marquis, you have done it handsomely. I admit I am vanquished by M. Labirinte; and my only consolation is, that I taught him how to beat me with my own weapons;—now have done.

MARQUIS. Bravo! des Roches; you bear it like a man; that is the true feeling. But, with your leave, I'll read on. "*I thought I loved M. des Roches, but I deceived myself. It was but a dream;—a dream of the heart. But you, my Fortunë, in offering me the first-lings of your affection, in all their freshness, have awakened me to a dear reality.*" So—who the devil would have thought that there was all that difference between a captain of horse and a doctrinaire deputy!—the first but a dream; the latter a reality! But, attend, gentlemen, and you shall have a further development of the atrocious Machiavelism of our learned graduate of—I know not what college.

LABIRINTE, (*trying to appear gay.*) Monsieur, the public man, in that case, was merged in the private man; and if you will believe me, my dear monsieur, the private man, hereafter, shall forever retire from such scenes.

MARQUIS. We can recognize no such distinction, between the public and the private man, my worthy Solon. You cannot thus divest yourself of your public character. You are a deputy, a representative, and the very incarnation of your constituents;—what you do, they do, and that is what makes the position of our poor des Roches so much the worse, inasmuch as he has been, in your person, wronged by a whole electoral college.

SERPENTINE. Who but the marquis would ever have thought of that. So, in your opinion then, the whole constituency of M. Labirinte have partaken of the good fortune of——

MARQUIS. Their representative, undoubtedly;—according to the true theory of a representative government. I'm correct, am I not, noble peer?

SAINT LUCE. I must confess that I never heard that doctrine applied to the rights of man before.

MARQUIS. Well, I'll go on; (reads,) "*Oh, my Fortunë! to you I owe the reality of this delightful sentiment—yes, I will avow it! and reproach myself without ceasing—not for preferring M. des Roches to you--for I met him first, and I knew you not; but for not having divined by intuition that you were; and that I was made for you!*" A very excellent idea that;—the simple laws of nature ought to have taught her, that there was an M. Fortuné Labirinte somewhere or other.

SERPENTINE. It is very genteelly expressed, however:—is the spelling good?

MARQUIS. The spelling is good;—but we are coming to something better. "*Do n't you be jealous, you little wretch, if I do receive this insufferable des Roches as formerly. Do you not perceive that it is only for the purpose of avoiding an open rupture? Can you suppose, that since you have awakened me to the realities of love, that I can, for a moment, forget you for that tawney braggadocio?* (that term is underlined,) *that tawney braggadocio who, as you justly remarked, in your last letter, knew no more than his horse!*"

DES ROCHES, (*with difficulty restraining his rage.*) M. Labirinte, I am proud to find that I have been esteemed a subject worthy of the exercise of your wit. It is just possible, that I may find some additional means of quickening your imagination.

LABIRINTE, (*troubled.*) Monsieur, it was merely a joke; a very foolish joke, I admit. (*aside.*) The marquis is determined to make him cut my throat.

DES ROCHES. We will adjust the matter in another place, monsieur. (*aside.*) Then I am the laughing-stock of all Paris.

SEVERAL OF THE COMPANY. Come, come, des Roches; M. Labirinte has told you he only meant it as a joke, and admits that it was a stupid one.

CLARISSA. Poor des Roches! Think of his teaching his rival to make love! Ha! ha!

SERPENTINE. Think of his being supplanted by such a one as our modest little deputy.

DES ROCHES, (*aside.*) Cursed vipers! they will spread this infernal story over town like wildfire. But, before I go out with the marquis, I'll break some of this damned fool's bones. (*aloud.*) M. Labirinte, did you write the letter from which M. de Beauregard has just been reading?

LABIRINTE, (*assuming a parliamentary air.*) Monsieur, upon the subject—of that—that letter, I beg leave to observe, that it was evidently a confidential letter—not an official one—and I protest ——

DES ROCHES. Did you write the letter? Yes or No?

THE COMPANY. Des Roches! des Roches! Hold! don't make a fool of yourself.

PRINCE CASTELLI. There is not the least occasion for a quarrel. It is all a joke of the marquis's.

DES ROCHES, (*furiously.*) Gentlemen, upon questions where my honor is implicated, I must be the sole judge. And I now tell M. Labirinte, that whoever wrote that letter, is a fool and an insolent puppy.

THE COMPANY. Des Roches! Des Roches!

SERPENTINE. Now they warm up! That's good! It was getting dreadfully dull.

DES ROCHES. M. Labirinte, I repeat it—you are an insolent puppy and a fool!

LABIRINTE, (*rising in parliamentary style.*) Monsieur, you are not in order. The erroneous epithets which you have just applied to me, I cannot accept. I return them ——

DES ROCHES, (*rising, and menacing his opponent with his fist.*) Then I'll apply something that you shall accept ——

THE COMPANY, (*interposing between the parties.*) Des Roches! Des Roches! be seated! Have you lost your senses? This is out of place!

LABIRINTE, (*whose courage rises as his protectors surround him.*) Oh! you need not think to scare me with your fists, monsieur!

DES ROCHES, (*turning with rage to the marquis.*) To press me to engage such an adversary; a contemptible imbecile; to kill whom—as I must—will only cover me with additional ridicule. Oh! marquis! your vengeance is cruel indeed!

MARQUIS, (*aside.*) I know it is. Ridiculous! to kill

LABIRINTE, (*aside.*) a tiger! (*aloud, to des Roches.*) Monsieur, let me tell you, that *in a parliamentaty tone* to *kill* a national representative is a matter of no trifling importance. A deputy is not a bedouin, monsieur!

DES ROCHES. Mille tonneres! You have insulted me, and you shall fight—or I'll know the reason why?

LABARINTE, (*assuming additional dignity.*) Well, monsieur, I will not fight; and I will tell you why. Now, monsieur, that as a representative of the people, I am no longer at my own disposal. I belong to them, monsieur. I have the charge of immense agricultural, political, maritime and commercial interests, monsieur! And, besides all this, an eminent luminary of the law has, from the time of Justin, pronounced duelling a savage and barbarous custom, which ——

DES ROCHES, (*contemptuously.*) Recollect, we are not in the Chambers, my little sermonizer!

LABIRINTE, (*emphatically.*) No! monsieur! but we are in France; and to France is due my political existence; to her must I render account of it. And as my political existence is inseparable from my personal existence—my duty to my country, and to my constituents, obliges me to decline your proposition, monsieur. And I do decline it!

DES ROCHES, (*exasperated.*) Then, monsieur, I shall take the liberty of giving your personal existence a sound caning.

THE COMPANY. Oh! des Roches! Why, you are out of your head! Be quiet! recollect!

LABIRINTE, (*very loud.*) I disregard your threats, monsieur. Faithful to my trust, I shall do my duty to my country. I shall have the courage to ——

SERPENTINE, (*amid shouts of laughter.*) The courage to be a poltroon. Brave Labirinte! I call for his health with all the honors. Let a civic crown be decreed him, made of hare-skin.

HERMINIE. Yes, in accordance with the old proverb—'timid as a hare.'

(*A conversation takes place.* DES ROCHES *is with difficulty restrained by his neighbors, and while struggling, addresses the marquis, who alone sits unmoved, except by laughter.*) You see, Beauregard, how this fellow baffles me? He has insulted me, and he quietly refuses me satisfaction; nor am I permitted to take it? I shall be the butt of all Paris. It is atrocious, marquis; and it is all your doings.

MARQUIS, (*gayly.*) Mine! mine! my dear des Roches? Oh! you surely cannot be serious; you have too much good taste to say so in earnest.

DES ROCHES. Fool that I am! deceived by this woman; supplanted by this simpleton; mocked by the marquis, and unable, though covered with ridicule, to get satisfaction in any quarter.

SAINT LUCE. Marquis, one word. This whole affair resolves itself into one single question. Is the woman, who has caused this émute, worth cutting throats about?"

ALL THE COMPANY. Right! right! That is it.

SAINT LUCE. It appears to me, that taking into view the manner in which the marquis has related the anecdote; the merriment with which he has treated the subject; and the character of the few lines he has read us from the lady's epistle; that she must be a person

of very slight consideration, and wholy unworthy the affections of a gentleman. Consequently, it only remains for des Roches and Labirinte to testify their contempt for the miserable creature, by mutually abandoning her, and laughing at their own foolish feelings of rivalry.

De Montal. Very correct. Saint Luce is perfectly right.

Duke de Serda. She is evidently not the sort of woman whom it behoves a gentleman to fight about.

Prince Castelli. Such women cannot jilt one by desertion; they only disembarrass him.

Major Brown. In this case, the last preferred is clearly the dupe.

Fitz Herald. I think M. Labirinte has the most reason to complain.

Baudricourt, (*laughing.*) So do I. Des Roches, you owe him your thanks at least, if not an apology. Has he not sacrificed himself for you, in relieving you from this woman? No matter about the means, look at the end.

Marquis, (*aside.*) Now, courage; let me hold out till the last. An ocean of blood seems swimming before my eyes.

(All the Company, *except des Roches and Labirinte.*) Speak, marquis. Who is the woman? Tell us her name. What is she?

Marquis, (*playing carelessly with his tooth-pick.*) This woman? why, you will be astonished to hear, perhaps—and perhaps again, you will not.

The Company. Come, the name! marquis, the name!

Des Roches, (*aside.*) He dares not! I am frightened at his looks.

Serpentine. Come, marquis, we are dying of impatience. Is she a woman of the town?

Marquis. Not yet. Just at present, she occupies a high rank.

Serpentine. A married woman?—a woman of fashion?

Marquis. Pardieu! I think she is. She is a married woman, and moves in the first circles. She is bu. eighteen years of age; of angelic beauty—but bold, artful, cunning and treacherous as the devil.

Serpentine. And she has a husband?

Marquis. Yes, she has a husband—a particular friend of mine; a man of gallantry, who never permits himself to be troubled by these little inconveniences of life; and one who would look upon the faithlessness of his wife with as much indifference as I should. A man whom no one would suspect of weakness; a man who would speak of such a misadventure with the same coolness that I feel now. Faith, were I in his place, I doubt not I should say precisely as I think he does: "After all, the poor child is in the spring-time of life, and while love is just budding forth. Though I am her husband, what right have I to complain? If she jilts me, does she not jilt her lover too? Poor thing, so he knows; but she intends it as a delicate way of securing me from the reproach of selfishness."

The Company. But her name! her name!

Serpentine. Marquis, I shall die if you do not tell me her name soon.

Marquis. Well, I will tell you. Her name is the Marchioness de Beauregard, formerly Dolores Pablo, now my wife.

(*The greater part of the guests started to their feet with surprise—the* Marquis *kept his seat—emptied his glass quietly, and turning to his cousin Flores, he repeated.*) "Yes, Dolores, your cousin Dolores. You will be kind enough to inform the Inca—my worthy father-in-law, will you not? (*then looking around upon his amazed guests, he said with an air of surprise,*) why, gentlemen, what is the matter? What do you stare at?—are you so much moved because the mistress of that poor fellow, des Roches, has jilted him for M. Labirinte?

Ewen de Ker Ellio, (*in an under tone, to the marquis.*) Monsieur, I tender you my services as a second.

Marquis, (*quietly,*) I am very much obliged to you, baron. But what for? The personal quarrel is between M. des Roches and M. Labirinte. I have nothing to do with it just now. My rights are merged in those of M. des Roches, as the conveyances would say. Now, gentlemen, that Messieurs des Roches and Labirinte know the name ofthe lady, they will be able to decide whether she is worth cutting each other's throats about. Were I in des Roches's place, however, I should be contented with winging Labirinte. But come, let us take our coffee and change the subject. Pour me out a cup, Cora, with your pretty white hand.

The company rose and returned to the dining-room. Coffee was served, but the conversation could not be revived—a dread and terror had sunk into the hearts of the men, and even the women were embarrassed. The marquis, however much he suffered inwardly, preserved a gay and easy exterior, and before his guests retired, put them as far at their ease as he could, by saying, "It was my purpose, ladies and gentlemen, to give you a novel entertainment. The characters exhibited are too well known to be kept secret longer, and this farce will furnish the world with gossip for a week at least. So I recommend to you to be as indiscreet as possible. I am serious The sooner it is exposed, the sooner it will be over; and now, if you hear any one presume to censure what I have done or shall do—oblige me by letting me know it at once Again, I recommend to you, the most extreme indiscretion."

The next morning a member of the house of Deputies was beaten within an inch of his life, and two days after, a captain of Cavaliers

fell, mortally wounded, in the Bois de Boulogne.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LETTER.

After leaving the Rocher de Cancale, the marquis, in order to carry out the part he had decided to play, exhibited himself at the opera, and dropped in at the houses of three or four of the leaders of the ton, who received company that evening.

As we have before observed, so generally was the ferocity of Colonel Koller dreaded, and so universally was the marquis admired and beloved, that his reception, everywhere, was cordial; and the nonchalance with which he treated the result of his morning's duel, was regarded with great complacency by his friends. The marquis himself, was neither more nor less agreeable and entertaining than was his wont. He studied to exhibit the same indifference before society to his wife's frailty, that he had done at the Rocher de Cancale.

About one o'clock he returned to his house; and in order to explain the real state of his feelings, as he experienced them, when alone, it will be necessary to relate how he came to fight Colonel Koller, and by what means he was made acquainted with his wife's infidelity.

The evening before, he had received by post, several letters from M. des Roches to the marchioness, and one dated that very day, from her to M. Labirinte. The marchioness had, it seems, publicly reproached her maid with her misconduct, in the presence of her household; and the woman, to revenge herself, had betrayed her mistress;—for Madame de Beauregard was so ignorant of human nature, and so incredibly impudent, as to continue her confidence in the wretch; and had not only intrusted her with the letter to M. Labirinte, but had even left in her possession a casket, containing her correspondence with M. des Roches, which she had before deposited in her room for greater safety.

The discovery came like a thunderbolt upon the marquis. After remaining for two hours buried in reflection, he decided upon his course.

That evening he made his appearance at his club, and was more than usually gay. He strolled into the billiard-room, where, among others, Colonel Koller was playing.

We have already adverted to the fact, that the marquis, who was as brave as Cæsar, but as amiable as brave, had often, though very politely, expressed his opinion to the colonel, that the latter's habit, of boasting of his sanguinary exploits, was in very bad taste. And what was truly singular, this atrocious murderer, whether from an involuntary respect for a man whose bravery was so well established, or from some inexpressible caprice, had always submitted to his reproof with extraordinary patience; though he did not much profit by the admonition. This evening, when the marquis entered the room, the colonel was about striking a ball. Seeing the marquis, he turned and saluted him, and then exclaimed:

"Look! marquis. I'll put that ball into the pocket, just as true as I did my own into the head of that young fighting-cock, the other morning. They say his mother has not done crying about him yet. I'm going to pocket the middle red."

"No, you 're not," replied M. de Beauregard, carelessly. And at the moment the colonel was about playing, he struck him a smart blow upon the elbow with his cane.

The colonel turned upon him furiously; his lips were white with rage:

"Marquis!" he exclaimed, "if that was intended as a jest, it was a very stupid one. You must explain yourself, or give me satisfaction."

"I never jest with any but my friends, monsieur," replied the marquis, haughtily, turning upon his heel.

"Then you meant to insult me!" cried the colonel, beside himself with rage.

"I intended to insult you," returned the marquis, with perfect nonchalance.

The colonel remained for a moment struck dumb, apparently, by the audacity of his antagonist; then recovering himself, a bitter malignity spread itself over his countenance, and he replied:

"That is quite enough, sir. You shall measure your length on the ground to-morrow morning. As the insulted party, I have the choice of weapons;—I choose pistols. I am also entitled to the first fire. This will suit me exactly, for I never killed a marquis yet; though I have often had a curiosity to know how it would seem."

Of course, there could be no accommodation between two such adversaries. The terms of the duel were arranged upon the spot; and it was agreed that the parties should meet on the Charenton race-track, the next morning.

The marquis returned to his house; and after pacing the floor of his apartment, in silent meditation, for a long time, he took from a casket the letters which had been sent him, inclosed them carefully in an envelope, and then sat down and wrote to the marchioness as follows:

"Thursday, 1 o'clock, A. M

"Dolorета Mia:—You are false to me. The letter which you will find inclosed, together with my will in this envelope, will show you that I know all. This morning I meet Colonel Koller;—he has the first fire. I insulted him purposely, in order to give him this advantage, for he never misses his aim. I am no spy; the knowledge of your conduct

came to me unexpectedly, and without my seeking.

"One of your maids, to whom you have probably given cause of offence, sent these letters to me in revenge. I return them to you.

"You are hardly eighteen, and apparently so candid and frank—so free from artifice or deceit—that nothing short of the perusal of such a correspondence as this, could have convinced me that you were not the most virtuous of women. I do not reproach you; for I am conscious that I deserve all that has happened.

"The time has come when I must explain the mystery of my conduct to you.

"Among my friends, I have been in the habit of speaking of my mistresses, and mocking at the marriage tie—its duties and its affections. I have even affected to reproach you for your indifference to the addresses of the gay and dissipated men who surrounded you.

"When alone with you, however, how different has been my language and my conduct. Like a slave I have prostrated myself at your feet. I have lavished the most passionate caresses, and the most tender endearments upon you. I have wanted words to express the ardor of my attachment, or to tell you, Dolores, how I loved you.

"You never adverted to my liasons with other women. Your charming ingenuousness of character never degenerated into a spirit of inquisitiveness; and your whole deportment was so equable and serene, that I really thought you were perfectly happy, in the secret assurance of my love; and that you either viewed my affected infidelities as mere jests, or else that you had penetrated my true notions, and felt that you could afford to pardon my *mauvaise honte* and dread of ridicule. I deceived myself.

"Perhaps, after all, you never were aware of the depth of my devotion to you, and never suspected the cruel struggle I maintained to conceal it. Perhaps, you even thought that I left your dear embrace, for the arms of the miserable and degraded beings whom I affected to fancy. Perhaps you never suspected the truth at all. Yes, doubtless, you have believed me as shamefully faithless as I pretended to be; and all the secret evidences of my love, have been unable to atone for the wantonness of my neglect in the face of the world. It was natural that you should think as you did of me, Dolores, and I do not reproach you; but now learn the cause of all these apparent contradictions in my demeanor as a husband; for I would not that you think worse of me, when I am gone, than I deserve:

"I am naturally a man of an open, generous disposition, and good sense; it has ever been my aim to appear the cold, selfish, cynical man of the world: I have affected vices, as others affect virtues, which they do not possess. In this game, your commonplace hypocrites have had the advantage of me; for they seek the approbation of the good—I, of the bad alone.

"It would only weary you, were I to enter into the detail of my education, by an uncle who was one of the most noted profligates of the scandalous court of Louis the Fifteenth. Suffice it to say, that I was early taught to rail at everything pure and good; to recognize no law but that of pleasure; to hold as vulgar and degrading, the most sacred duties. Thus I acquired the detestable habit of exaggerating the vices I had, and affecting those I had not; until my reputation equalled, in its evil report, that of the most famous hero of the regency.

"In that animal courage which enables a man to stake his life freely upon a point of etiquette or honor, I am by no means deficient; but the scoffs and sneers of the fashionable world, the laughter and jeers of the dissipated set of whom I am, and so long have been the leader—these things have terrors for me which I have not the nerve to face.

"Hence it is, that, for fear of being pointed at as a doting husband—a character of which I ought to have been proud, and in which I might have found true happiness—I have been hurried into every excess, in order to show my indifference to that which I most dearly prized, and to conceal from the eyes of the world those tender emotions with which my heart was overflowing.

"When I left France for your native land, Dolores, it was with designs of the most grovelling and sordid nature. I sought to replenish my waning resources by forming a matrimonial connection with some wealthy heiress. The state of her affections, or of my own, was not to have been, for a moment, taken into consideration;—I intended, in short, to marry where I could find the most money, and the least love. What was the result? I found you; I loved you passionately; I made you my wife, and brought you to my home, a poorer man, in purse, than when I left it.

"My course of life since our arrival in Paris is but too well known to you, to need any further description than I have already given of it. The defence of my conduct, such as it is, (and poor and paltry I admit it to be,) I have laid before you; and I need not repeat it. Day by day, my passion for you increased; and with it, also increased my confidence in your truth, and the audacity with which I tempted it; but I had already begun to weary of the part I was playing—of the constant restraint which I imposed upon myself, and of the impertinence to which I, myself, by way of bravado, subjected you. For some time, I had meditated an escape from my voluntary bondage, and to breathe once more, with you as my companion, the air of freedom and happiness. This was my plan.

"I repented that, for my whole life, I had been living for others, and not for myself. For the sake of winning the vain admiration of the thoughtless and the wicked, I had sacrificed all of those pleasures which were agreeable to my natural tastes; I had dammed up the true sources of happiness, and had arrived at the period of middle age without conferring any signal benefit upon my kind, and without having secured for myself anything, but the reputation of a rake and a profligate. I said to myself—'It is enough! I will abandon a life so fruitless and unprofitable to myself and others; I will leave Paris, as a residence, for ever. With the wife of my bosom, I will retire to my estates; where, with all the appliances of comfort and enjoyment at hand, we will lead lives of usefulness and innocent pleasure, to the end of our days.' Such, Dolores, were my intentions, when these fatal letters were handed to me.

"That was a terrible moment, Dolores. The blow was struck home! it went at once to the heart; but among all the mingled emotions which swelled within my breast, there was nothing of bitterness, of hatred, or even of anger, against you. With deep sorrow and anguish, there was mingled a feeling of the tenderest compassion, when I thought of you. Were I a father, and a beloved child should raise its hand against me, should I be enraged? No, no; but, grieved, my answer would be tears. 'And so it was in this case, Dolores; I cursed you not—I wept—yes, wept! Tell that to your des Roches and your Labirinte.

"Such, I repeat it, were my first and most natural reflections—the impulses of a kind and tender heart. But reflection soon placed the matter in another point of view. I began to appreciate my loss—you had failed me, and what had I left? You had won my heart: you had trampled upon it, and thrown it away! You, you; with all your virtuous seeming and exemplary deportment by day—you, whom I had contemplated with rapture as you slept the sleep of calm and child-like innocence by night—you were false! But no;—no reproaches, Dolores; I write, not to reproach you, but to bid you an eternal farewell! It only remains for me to tell you why I provoked Col. Koller.

"I ought, in order to sustain the character I have hitherto supported, to be the first to divulge your shame, and escape ridicule by setting this example of laughing first myself—but I cannot. Life has become insupportable to me from this hour—what, then, shall I do? blow out my brains? It is the act of a fool—a madman! besides, there are some powerful thoughts of God and hereafter which rush upon one's mind, when he places a pistol to his head.

"But I must die, and I recoil from the task of becoming my own executioner; I have pitched upon one who will perform that office with cheerfulness and dispatch; I have insulted Col. Koller, and we fight this morning.

"All this is surely at variance with the principles I have professed to act upon, and to inculcate among my followers. According to the dogmas of the school of philosophy which I have founded, it would be perfectly ridiculous for the Marquis de Beauregard, either to kill, or to be killed, because his wife was unfaithful. Still, I think the plan one, not ill contrived to preserve appearances. Die I must—for life is a burthen to me. Die for such a cause openly—either by my own hand, or by that of another?—I cannot. But I have often expressed my abhorrence of this sanguinary colonel. Nothing can be more natural, than that we should quarrel; the result is certain, and so I shall escape being laughed at after I am gone.

"Adieu, then, my still dearly beloved Dolores—you will find, I think, about fifty thousand crowns at my banker's, and my estates, which I have settled upon you, will bring you about sixty thousand a year. Take my advice; (do n't think I give it out of jealousy,) remain a widow. You are young and beautiful; fond of pleasure; prudent, but yet resolute in obtaining it; and with the fortune you possess, I think you may live happily, and enjoy yourself much better single than married. Adieu, ! once more, and forever, adieu!

"P. S. 'Tis odd enough, after all, that I should get myself killed for that—is it not?"

This letter written, M. de Beauregard enveloped it with the other papers; sealed the packet, and superscribed it as follows:

"*This is my testament—let it be given to Madame de Beauregard.*"

After some other preparations, the marquis laid down, and slept like Cæsar, till six in the morning; when he was awakened by his seconds. At eight, the parties met at the appointed place, where, by some extraordinary accident, the colonel, who had taken deliberate aim, missed his man, and only cut off one of the curls which waved in the wind, over the temple of the marquis.

M. de Beauregard had come to meet his death, and he had awaited it with a calmness and composure, amounting to perfect indifference; but the danger over, his love of life—strange as it may appear—returned.

Was it the instinct of self-possession? or, had some new and consolatory idea struck him?—we will not undertake to say; but certain it is, that the marquis, after having received the fire of his adversary, never for a moment thought of firing in the air—especially as the colonel was not one who was likely to miss his mark the second time.

Perhaps, when he covered his man with the pistol, he did feel a momentary scruple, inasmuch as he knew that he had been the aggressor; but the reflection that this pernicious duellist, had himself always been in the habit of provoking his victims to their destruction,

determined him to rid society of such a scourge. He shot the colonel dead.

With the love of life, returned all the marquis's infernal affectation of cynicism. His first study now, was, to avoid the ridicule attendant upon his wife's lapse from virtue, by being himself the first to announce it, and to laugh at it, as a merry jest. His only dread was, that the event might have already taken wind; and that he might thence be looked upon as one of those unhappy husbands, who are the last to know or believe in their own disgrace.

To accomplish his end, he had concerted the féte at the Rocher de Cancale—with what wonderful address and courage he carried out his purpose, we have already related; but the terrible conflict of mingled emotions which were raging within his breast, can better be imagined than described. It is not difficult to imagine, after perusing the letter which the marquis wrote to his wife, what a painful restraint the unfortunate gentleman put upon his feelings, and how profound was the grief which he concealed under the mask of careless indifference.

But we have something still further to add to this explanation.

Undoubtedly, the affectation of nonchalance which the marquis exhibited when he exposed the falsehood of his wife, must appear disgusting as a refinement upon the system of vicious cynicism which he professed. But there was something more than affectation in all this; the marquis, in reality, still loved his wife—and feeling certain that this faux pas would for ever, exclude her from fashionable society, and as it now forced her into retirement, his jealousy was somewhat gratified, although his love was wounded.

Culpable as his wife had been, M. de Beauregard, in the fulness of his self-complacency, was fain to attribute this fault rather to mortification at his disdainful treatment, than to any inherent vice, or want of principle. His hopes were revived—he conceived, that obliged hereafter to live in retirement, she would strive by redoubled devotion and tenderness, to make him forget his wrongs, and that a free and generous pardon would unite their hearts more closely than ever.

M. de Beauregard was sincere when he told the marchioness, in his last epistle, that he had begun to feel the necessity of a change of habits, associations, and mode of life; and that the project of retirement to a life of calm, quiet, and innocent enjoyment, had occupied his mind when his misconduct had rendered the position of his hopes almost impossible. He doubted whether it was advisable to read to the marchioness the letter which he had written, when he supposed himself upon the eve of eternity. It was true, that with this evidence of his unbounded affection and generosity, she might be touched with remorse, and moved to repentance; but on the other hand, was it wise to let her know the extent of her empire in his heart, even after she had been guilty of such base treachery and deceit?

Upon the whole, the marquis determined to reserve the decision of this question, until he had seen what effect the revelation of this terrible discovery would have upon his wife—for it must be borne in mind that she was, as yet, ignorant of the treason of her "femme de chambre." Notwithstanding his knowledge of the world, and especially his knowledge of the sex, the marquis was yet at a loss in his own mind, to account for the fate of his wife. The serious, reserved, simple, and virtuous carriage and deportment of the marchioness had completely deceived him. His pride would not suffer him to believe, that he had been deceived by the same means which are employed for the dishonor of husbands in general. He sought for some singular, some mysterious process, by which his wife had been led astray. There was something about it which he would not, and could not understand; and he determined, before he slept, to take with him the packet of letters to the apartment of his wife, and come to an explanation at once, even at the risk of disturbing her slumbers by his startling communication.

The bed-chamber of the marquis was at a considerable distance from that of the marchioness—he occupying the right wing of their magnificent hotel, while she reposed in the left—many large saloons and halls intervening between them. The moon shone bright through the windows of the lofty rooms, through which the marquis took his way to the couch of his bride—and so gentle was his entrance into the apartment, that Dolores, who slept soundly, was not awakened; and he stood for some moments contemplating her, as she lay by the light of an alabaster lamp of antique form, suspended from the ceiling.

The bed-curtains and drapery of this chamber were of rose-color and white; the chairs and couches were covered with white satin, embroidered with boquets of red roses—the ornaments were of ivory, exquisitely carved; everything was pure, and fresh, and beautiful, well arranged, and in perfect keeping.

The sleeping lady lay with her head deeply sunk in a pillow of down, covered with the finest of cambric, and edged with lace—beneath the rich damask counterpane, the outline of her figure disposed in an easy position, could be traced—one sleeve of her night-dress which had slipped up, left exposed an arm of exquisite symmetry, round hand, and white as alabaster, upon which reposed her lovely head—masses of crow-black hair appeared from under the edge of her night-cap, trimmed with Valenciennes of the richest fabric—from her moist vermilion lips escaped her gentle breath of softest perfume; and her

cheeks were slightly flushed by the kindly warmth of slumber.

The marquis approached the bed of his wife, with stealthy step, and with head drooping upon his chest; for a long time he contemplated the sleeping woman with an expression of mingled anger, sorrow and affection. A bitter smile flitted across his features, a deep sigh burst from his breast, and he muttered: "With such a countenance, with all that innocence and simplicity of mien, who would suspect——"

Dolores made a slight movement, withdrew her left arm from under her head, opened her eyes, and uttered a faint cry of surprise, at the unexpected appearance of her husband.

The marquis gazed upon her with an expression almost menacing—

"What time is it? what do you want my dear?" asked the marchioness, sitting up in bed.

The marquis placed his candle upon a night-table near the bed, and handed the packet of letters to his wife, without uttering a word: waiting with anxiety to observe the effect they produced.

The marchioness, at first astonished, took the letters, examined them for a moment, but sufficiently long to recognize them, and passing them under the bed-clothes appeared to rub them with her hands. She did not either turn pale or change countenance.

M. de Beauregard, after contemplating her for a while in silence, said in a faltering voice:

"Well, Dolores——"

The marchioness continued silent, with her head down, and her hands apparently busy under the clothes.

M. de Beauregard, attributing her silence to confusion and embarrassment, approached his wife, and said, with more of sorrow than of anger:

"Dolores, you have deceived me; that was wrong."

The lady made no reply.

Irritated at her obstinate silence, the marquis took her hand, and exclaimed:

"Give me some answer, at least."

In withdrawing his wife's hand from under the bedclothes, M. de Beauregard observed that a large quantity of scraps of paper followed it. The marchioness had quickly occupied her time in destroying the proofs of her infidelity.

The marquis was confounded at the brazen audacity of this behavior. He had come, expecting tears, despair, and bitter repentance: he found nothing but reckless hardihood in crime, which only sought to destroy the evidence which threatened its exposure. A reception so different from that which he had anticipated, overturned all his plans of action. He was at a loss how to proceed.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed; "your conduct is incredible! Will you dare to deny the truth of those letters which you have destroyed? Think you I have no other proofs of your infamy?"

Dolores made no reply.

The marquis became exasperated; he stamped violently with his foot, and exclaimed:

"What! not a word?"

"I have nothing to say to you, monsieur," replied the lady with perfect composure.

"And these letters, madam! these letters!"

The marchioness continued silent.

M. de Beauregard, restraining his rage as far as possible, went on:

"I was at first inclined, madam, to attribute your silence to shame and confusion; but the coolness and presence of mind which you have exhibited in destroying those letters, convince me that I was wrong. Do not, therefore, attempt to play upon me further; I am not to be deceived; and now permit me to say, madam, that the best you can do, is to express your regret for the injury you have inflicted upon me."

Dolores continued mute and unmoved.

For the first time in his life, the marquis was so far thrown off his guard, as to meditate violence against a woman. He clenched his fists, and cast a furious glance upon his wife; then starting back, he threw himself upon a sofa, and buried his face in his hands.

The marchioness seized the opportunity, while her husband was lost in emotion, to throw on a loose wrapper, put her feet in her slippers; and, taking a seat at the hearth, began to stir up the fire. The marquis, aroused from his reveries by the noise, turned his head, and perceived his wife seated at her ease, before the fire. Her night-cap she had taken off, and with her ivory fingers she was arranging the heavy massess of her coal-black hair; her countenance was as calm and passionless as ever.

M. de Beauregard was overcome—he was conquered by her diabolical sang froid. He drew a chair to the fire-place, and seating himself by her side, said, with an appearance of calmness which he did not feel:

"Pardieu, madam! you do not seem to relish curtain lectures. Your silence is but too significant. You are right—never answer disagreeable questions. Oh! I understand you perfectly. Here I come with the proofs of your double infidelity. I show them to you, expecting at least a few penitential tears, if only for appearance sake—but no; you are as cool and as impassive as marble. I tell you, madam, that there is not one woman in a hundred, who, if aroused by her husband with tidings of such fearful import, would not have shuddered—would not have been overwhelmed with shame and confusion of face. But you!—why, you seem to regard it as a matter of no sort of importance whatever, and you are only eighteen years of age! a promising young woman, I must confess. Well, in such a case reproaches would be

breath thrown away; so we will to business. Will you permit me, madam, if the question should not seem too presumptuous, to ask, what are your plans for the future?"

"I do not exactly understand you, monsieur."

"I'll vary my question, then, and endeavor to suit it to your powers of comprehension, madam. Do you suppose, that after what has occurred, we can live together as heretofore?"

"That is for you to decide, monsieur."

"So," said the marquis, with a smile of bitter mockery, "you will still condescend to live with me upon friendly terms?"

"If you wish me to, monsieur."

"And suppose I do not wish you to, madam?" cried the marquis in a fury. "Suppose I should choose to turn you out of doors as an infamous harlot?"

"Oh, then I should go, monsieur!" replied the lady, with perfect nonchalance, as she occupied herself in buttoning the sleeves of her robe de chambre.

M. de Beauregard was almost beside himself with passion; he rose and paced the apartment with rapid strides, and in perfect silence, until he became comparatively cool, when he took his seat again, and continued the conversation.

"And suppose, madam, that in the extremity of my generosity, I should be weak enough to pardon you, might I depend upon your exemplary good conduct and perfect fidelity for the time to come?"

"That is more than I can say, monsieur."

"What, madam! if I were to forget the past, could you not even guaranty that my honor would be safe for the future?"

"I cannot foresee what will occur, monsieur."

"Well, there!—frank at least! Madam, receive my most sincere acknowledgments, for your kindness in permitting me to doubt. But do you suppose that I should rest satisfied so to do?"

"You know best, whether you will or not, monsieur."

"Pardieu! you are candor itself, madam! I am only surprised, madam, that you do not recriminate—that you do not reproach me with my folly and affectation, with my dissipation and debauchery, with the mistresses to whom I surrendered myself, and with the rakes whom I encouraged to address you. You could make out a strong case, my lady; why do you not do so?—why not carry the war into Africa?"

"You have merely done what you chose, monsieur."

"But you must admit that my conduct has chilled your affection for me, wounded your feelings, mortified you, and, in fine, driven you to manifest your resentment by infidelity?"

"I never felt any resentment, monsieur."

"No resentment, madam?"

"None whatever, monsieur."

The marquis was bewildered—"And so, madam," he continued, "your conduct, in this shameful business, has not been in the slightest degree influenced by my treatment of you?"

"Not in the slightest degree, monsieur."

"Then it was from sheer wantonness and lasciviousness, that you degraded yourself and dishonored me?"

"I shall not attempt to defend myself, by denying the truth."

"Your regard for the truth is highly becoming, madam, and very consistent with your conduct on the present occasion!"

"I am only answering your interrogations, monsieur."

"I presume, then, that if my deportment toward you in public, had been the same that it was in private—that is, if I had shown myself everywhere, and at all times the most devoted of husbands, you would have deceived me just the same?"

"I don't know how that would have been; I am as ignorant of the past as of the future, monsieur."

"Very well, madam—you have a very concise and matter-of-fact way of treating the matter, it must be admitted; you waste no words. Permit me to imitate your example in this—suppose I forbid you to receive your lovers at this house."

"You have a right to do so, monsieur; the house is your own."

"In a week you will depart for my estate in Dauphiny."

The marquis awaited with some anxiety his wife's answer to this decree.

"I should prefer to remain in Paris this winter, monsieur," was the reply.

"And I, madam, prefer that you should accompany me to Dauphiny."

"If you compel me to accompany you, I shall, of course, monsieur."

"And you will show yourself as dutiful and amiable a wife as you are at present?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"With the hope of wearying me, and obliging me to return to Paris?"

"That is my hope, monsieur."

"And suppose that I do not choose to be wearied into returning?"

"You will be, monsieur."

These last words were pronounced with an emphasis and firmness of tone that fairly startled the marquis. The audacious coolness of this woman confounded him. Hitherto he had found her quiet, submissive, reserved, and silent; but that she possessed such indomitable obstinacy and resolution, he had never conceived. His wrath, alternately excited and restrained he could curb no longer.

"Pardieu! madam!" he exclaimed, "I am a fool to trouble myself any further about you, or even to consider you my wife,

after what has occurred this evening at the Rocher de Cancale. I gave a dinner to some gentlemen about town, madam, for your especial benefit; I entertained them with the story of your infamy; I read your letter to Labirinte aloud to des Roches in the presence of all; I covered both of them with ridicule, and set them upon each other like mad dogs, reserving to myself the punishment of the survivor; and I told all my friends to spread the report of your shame, and to assure all Paris of my perfect indifference and contempt for you and your paramours. My revenge is taken already, madam. That is the way men of my stamp treat women like you."

"That is what you have done—is it?" said the marchioness, without manifesting the slightest emotion.

"Yes, madam, I have done as I tell you. Oh! I am not one of your romantic husbands, to weep, and sigh, and come the tragic upon such a trifling occasion. You would have had me sad and broken-hearted, I suppose?"

"Every one puts his own estimate upon his own honor, monsieur."

"And the world, madam—how do you think the world will receive you hereafter, madam?"

"The world will do just as you do, monsieur: if you separate from me, the world will follow your example."

"You never loved me then—never?" asked the marquis, sadly, changing the tenor of the discussion without premeditation.

Dolores made no reply.

"Why did you marry me then, madam?" persisted the marquis.

"My desire to see Paris, and to move in fashionable society, enabled me to overlook the immense disparity of our ages, monsieur."

It had never occurred to M. de Beauregard, that he was in fact five-and-twenty years his wife's senior; his uninterrupted career of success with the sex—the undiminished admiration which he still received from the ranks of fashion, had prevented him from realizing that he was growing old, while Dolores was still in the spring-time of life. What a terrible revelation to be made to a man of M. de Beauregard's character—to be made, too, by his wife, and boldly offered as an excuse for her infidelity. His jealousy and his self-esteem were, at one blow, wounded to the quick.

Nothing is more common with men of pleasure, than to lose all consciousness of the lapse of time. A man of forty imagines that a woman of twenty considers him only just matured. But when some sudden event occurs to force him to run over his own account, what pangs of envy and regret shoot through his heart, as he finds that youth is gone, and that every day carries him farther and farther from its fairy fountain.

The strange and unheard-of manner in which Dolores treated the subject, and the dry and cold manner in which she answered all his inquiries, overthrew all the marquis's plans and expectations. He found himself entangled in an inexplicable net.

Could he make a serious affair of this with his wife, after having publicly treated the occurrence with such indifference? Could he sustain the part that he had assumed to act? Would it be better to force the marchioness to abandon Paris, and retire from the world, in the hope that a reformation might be wrought in her character? or was it best to separate from her altogether, and send her back to her friends.

The last plan would doubtless have been the most judicious, but the marquis had two reasons for not adopting it. First, it would be too much like a common husband broken down with sorrow, and fretted by stifled indignation. And then, secondly, he still loved Dolores in spite of her conduct, and in spite of himself. His mind was too strongly agitated by the harrowing events that had occurred, to permit him to decide at once upon his plan. After a short silence, he arose and said:

"To-morrow, madam, you shall know my intentions with regard to you, and I trust I shall find you prepared to submit to whatever I think most expedient and proper."

"I shall wait your orders, monsieur."

The marquis returned to his own apartment.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RESEMBLANCE.

The scene at the Rocher de Cancale made a sombre impression upon Ewen de Ker Ellio, and increased his dislike for Paris and Parisian life. Nightly, upon his return to his noisy hotel, in the rue Montmartre, he experienced a longing for the quiet and comfort of his own chateau of Treff Hartlog, to which he would have returned without delay, but for his dinner invitation at the hotel of M. Dunoyer, and some business arrangements which remained to be concluded with the same gentleman.

He had already heard from the good Abbé de Kerouellan, who assured him, in terms of great exultation, that he had found it the easiest thing in the world to form for him a matrimonial connection with one of the five houses in Brittany; and that the parents of Mademoiselle Yvonne de Kergalek, only awaited his return to enter into the preliminaries for the union of their houses and estates.

Tired as Ewen was of Paris, he congratulated himself on his journey, inasmuch as it had entirely dispelled the wild illusions with which ennui had overwhelmed him, and had left him the quiet, sensible, and rational man that he was by nature.

It will be recollected that the baron was engaged to dine with his cousin, at the house of M. Dunoyer, some eight or ten days after the

scene at the Rocher de Cancale, and M. de Montal having apprised Ewen that it would not be in his power to call for him, the latter presented himself alone at the day and hour appointed at the portal of the banker.

In his somewhat provincial anxiety not to keep his entertainer waiting, M. De Ker Ellio arrived rather sooner than he was expected. A servant, who had just taken off his gaudy livery in order to set the table with more ease to himself, opened the door and ushered the baron into the saloon, where he requested him to wait until he had announced his arrival to the lady of the house. Then muttering to himself, that monsieur must have risen and breakfasted early to be so sharp set for dinner, he went in search of the long wand with a candle at the end of it, which was used to light the lustres and candelabras.

Ewen was left alone.

In order to understand the scene which followed, in will be necessary to give some description of the apartment and its furniture, where it took place.

Directly opposite the fire-place, over which was a mantel-glass, opened the door of M. Dunoyer's library. The library, lighted only by a single lamp, was dark enough, while the saloon, illuminated by chandeliers and lustres, was resplendent with light. Ewen, leaning his elbow upon the mantel-piece, was gazing with an air of vacancy in the glass. What was his amazement, when, after a few moments, he saw appear upon the surface of the mirror, the perfect resemblance of the mysterious portrait of Treff Hartlog. Like its fearful original, the face was of marble paleness, and stood out, as it were, from a dark and sombre back-ground, like its prototype; the countenance, which now presented itself to his view, was of a perfect oval, the nose straight and finely chiseled, the eyes black, with long lashes, and the snow-white forehead, overshadowed by masses of coal-black hair. Never was resemblance more striking than that which met the gaze of the bewildered baron.

The prodigy, however, was susceptible of an easy explanation. Therese had entered the saloon from the library; the heavy carpet had returned no sound to her gentle footstep, and when, arrived at the door, she perceived the presence of a stranger, she paused; and, for a moment, her image was reflected in the glass.

Ewen turned pale—his heart ceased to beat—he believed himself under the influence of some supernatural illusion; and he held his breath in anxious expectation, without stirring from his position.

Presently, the image grew less distinct, and soon vanished entirely.

Therese, startled at her discovery, had retreated with noiseless tread, into the obscurity of the library. When Ewen came to himself, conscious that the person whose image was reflected in the glass ought to be behind him, he turned; but no one was there.

This strange apparition, apparently unaccountable as that of the mysterious portrait of Treff Hartlog, might have astonished a man less superstitious than Ewen: judge, then, what must its effect have been upon the baron.

It was not long before M. and Madame Dunoyer entered the saloon, and apologized to their guest for their apparent remissness. Ewen, whose countenance betrayed some extraordinary emotion, answered them with an air of so much abstraction, that they regarded him with surprise.

Several guests arrived, and M. de Ker Ellio was enabled, by degrees, to overcome his embarrassment. M. de Montal entered, and, soon after, Therese, her sister, and Miss Hubert.

At the sight of Therese, M. de Ker Ellio's astonishment was unbounded. By the light of the lamps and candelabras, which gleamed full upon her face, the resemblance between the young girl and the magic portrait became still more apparent. Even the slight natural mark over her left eyebrow was there, as in the picture of the weird lady of Treff Hartlog.

All the wise resolves of the baron vanished as a dream. His love for the phantom which had haunted his days of solitude, returned, in all its violence; and he prostrated his soul in abject homage at the pedestal of his idol, Therese. In her he doubted not to find the qualities with which his inflamed imagination had embellished the unknown, as well as the features which the artist had bestowed upon her. She seemed to him to be his fate—by how many extraordinary occurrences and coincidences had it been shadowed forth, that she was to exercise an omnipotent influence, for good or ill, over his destiny! By what extravagant chance was it, that this young girl so exactly resembled that fearful being, who, a century before, had been the evil demon of the house of Ker Ellio? Was he menaced with similar misfortunes from a similar cause? His thoughts were lost in chaos.

The distraction of mind which these strange reflections produced, in connection with his natural reserve, prevented Ewen from exhibiting himself to much advantage; so that, even if the affections of Therese had not already been fixed upon de Montal, the Chouan chief would have had but little chance of securing them.

Dinner was announced. Twice M. Dunoyer was obliged to request M. de Ker Ellio to conduct madam to the table; and, when he had done so, vain were all the attempts of the ancienne Heloise to attract the attention of her absent-minded guest. His eyes and his thoughts were fixed upon Therese. The young girl said little, but that little was well and gracefully expressed. Never had accents of such bewitching melody smote upon the

ear of the lost baron. Twice or thrice, M. de Montal, who took a pleasure in exhibiting the acquirements of Therese, led her into conversation. Ewen was charmed with her wit and tact, which shone to great advantage, when contrasted with the dull and commonplace talk of the guests who surrounded the table of the banker.

We have already said, that M. de Ker Ellio, though distingué in his appearance, was not eminently handsome; and the peculiar emotions under which he labored, by no means improved his physiognomy. On the other hand, the preoccupation of his mind, gave him an air at all times distrait, and occasionally awkward.

M. Dunoyer watched him closely, and soon detected the cause of his embarrassment—his keen eye readily perceived the ardent admiration with which he regarded Therese—and the banker was himself soon wrapped in deep meditation, which was only disturbed when his glances fell upon Therese and Ewen.

The famous party at the Rocher du Cancale, was the principal topic of conversation among the guests, as it had been of society at large, for the week past. M. de Montal, as the particular friend of the marquis, was overwhelmed with questions.

"The marquis is richer and more gay than ever," he said; "his good luck has made him perfectly reckless. Within a few days he has received news of the death of his father-in-law, Pabla, of Havanna. Thus the marchioness, who, fortunately for him, he did not discard, has brought him money enough to plate her sin with gold. M. de Beauregard, in order to pass the first day of mourning in retirement, has gone to preside over a great hunting party at Breteuil, where he has also sent his establishment. Some twenty of the wildest of our young men of fashion, form his suite, and the way they will spend the next fortnight, will make the provincials stare."

"They will not be without their ladies in waiting, I 'll engage," remarked Madame Dunoyer. "And his little wife, with her convent airs, what a queer one! Is it true that she is not received in society? and that they have lived separate since the night at the Rocher de Cancale?"

"Who is that talking of the Rocher de Cancale?" inquired M. Dunoyer, with a malicious emphasis.

"Oh! never you mind!" replied Madam Dunoyer, shrugging up her shoulders. "Come, tell us, de Montal, is the marquis really separated from his wife?"

"Not at all, madam," returned de Montal; "they live together as usual. But the effrontery of the marchioness, in presenting herself in society, has been very properly rebuked."

"How? tell us how!" said Madame Dunoyer.

"Some days since, just before they went into mourning, I chanced to be at the house of Madame le Duchess de Noirmont; Madame de Beauregard entered, she saluted the duchess with all the assurance imaginable, and then took her seat beside two ladies who were conversing—they immediately rose and changed their position. The marchioness herself soon after arose, and took a seat in another part of the room—her neighbors arose in turn, and left her vicinity. A dead silence prevailed for twenty minutes, which the marchioness sat out, less moved, apparently, than any one else, and then took her leave without even a frown, or the slightest change of countenance."

"I should have thought she would have died with shame," said Madame Dunoyer.

"Not she," returned de Montal; "if she never dies but from shame, she will live for ever."

The subject was dropped, and M. de Montal, notwithstanding his relationship, and the ties of friendship which existed between them, began to rally his cousin; to show himself off before his Theresa. He succeeded in his object without exciting the suspicion of M. de Ker Ellio, whose wits, to use a common expression, were wool-gathering.

Madame Dunoyer also, whose bad heart and low breeding, were always in the foreground, regardless of her obligations as hostess, undertook in her turn to quiz the baron—supposing that, as a Vendéan, he was necessarily pious, she addressed to him a torrent of the impious nonsense of the old infidel school; and asked him, if the cures in Brittany did not always choose handsome housekeepers; and whether they did not occasionally abuse the privilege of the confessional.

M. de Ker Ellio's religious principles were somewhat strict. He had been accustomed to regard a mother of a family, surrounded by her offspring, as an object of respect and almost of veneration; but when his reverie was broken in upon by the coarse and unbecoming tirade of Madame Dunoyer, he was shocked and disgusted. As soon as he had recovered himself, he replied dryly:

"Madam, I was taught by my mother to respect religion and its ministers, and I have ever found both it and them deserving of reverence."

Madame Dunoyer either did not, or would not understand the intent of this reply; and in return, gave him a perfectly Voltairian retort. "We Parisian mothers, on the contrary, teach our children to despise these fools and bigots—do we not, Achille?"

M. Dunoyer, who was another disciple of the same school, replied carelessly: "Do n't refer your theological disputes to me—I regard religion as merely the idle beating of a drum, to call old women and fools to arms—am I not right, my dear count?"

So proud was M. Dunoyer of the presence of a man of title, that he never failed to be

stow upon him his noble appellation at full length. M. de Montal, who well knew how unkindly the banker treated his daughter, and that Therese would be rather gratified to see him receive a rebuke, assumed, as far as he could, the grand air of M. de Beauregard, and replied: "I must beg leave to inform you, my good fellow, that *we* make it a point to respect religion. It is all a matter of taste, if you will; but this principle is fixed and universal in good society—*we* invariably treat religion and its ministers with reverence."

The word *we*, emphasized as it was, drew the line of demarcation between M. de Montal and M. Dunoyer so distinctly, that the latter bit his lips with mortification, and even Madame Dunoyer blushed to the ears.

Ewen, again buried in meditation, took no part in the conversation.

"What!" exclaimed M. Dunoyer, who had recovered from his confusion; "would you preserve the union of church and state? Away with such a union, it was broken down by the revolution of eighty-nine, and trampled under foot by the *third estate*—do you see, by the *centre* of the chamber—the party to which my father belonged. That constitutes the true nobility of the present day. There is no real aristocracy but that of wealth;—why, the proudest duke in the realm could not get a sixpence for his title!"

"That is because the purse-proud citizens are not permitted to obtain nobility by purchase, my dear M. Dunoyer," replied the count, with a contemptuous smile.

But we will not follow out this conversation, in which the wit and insolence of M. de Montal obtained an easy triumph.

After dinner, one of the guests, thinking that it would gratify Madame Dunoyer, requested Therese to sing. The fat lady colored with vexation, but was obliged to direct her daughter to take her seat at the piano. The young girl promptly declined; but a secret glance from M. de Montal changed her purpose, and she complied with the request.

Therese sung with such taste, feeling, and sweetness—she so excelled even herself, as she had been used to appear, that in ten or fifteen minutes, her mother, furious with jealousy, called out, "Therese, Therese, my dear, stop; you will get a pain in the chest—that will do my love!"

Ewen had been wrapped in ecstacy: by some mysterious sympathy, every note she had uttered, every cord she had struck, vibrated upon the master-strings of his heart, and its melody continued to dwell within his breast long after the sweet musician was hushed. Twice he felt the hot tears trickling down his cheeks, but happily they were unperceived by others, and he wiped them away unseen. Whist parties were soon formed, and Ewen took the opportunity to leave the house unobserved and arrived at his hotel half crazed. At times he abandoned himself to the wildest ecstacies of joy, as he thought that his ideal love was a true presentiment, and that the dream-girl, whom he so long had worshipped, was indeed incarnate, and would be his. Then he was plunged in the depths of despair by the idea that Therese might never love him, and that she had already conceived an unfavorable opinion of him.

We will repeat, that Ewen, upon sight of Mademoiselle Dunoyer, was, at once, convinced that she was endowed with all the perfection of his imaginary idol. He seemed to have known her already; and his first interview sufficed to raise his passion for her to the highest pitch of delirium. On the morrow, his first impulse was to go at once to the house of the banker, but he felt that he could not control his emotions; and, fancying that he might commit some ridiculous excess, he curbed his impatience, and resolved to wait untill he had become somewhat cooler.

But he waited in vain; each day added fuel to the flame which consumed him. All the fearful excitement he had experienced while in solitude returned upon him, heightened by the circumstance that it was now based upon a vivid reality.

Alone, and without counsel, M. de Ker Ellio remained a few days at his hotel, in the noisy quarter where it was located, unable to determine upon any one of a hundred wild projects which flitted through his brain. Time and again he had repaired to the house of M. de Montal, to whom he felt attracted by an irresistible sympathy, and upon whom, on account of his intimacy with the family of the banker, he placed his chief dependence for advice and assistance; but it was not until after several days that he succeeded in finding that gentleman at home.

The Chouan chief was sadder, more haggard and pale than when the Abbé de Kerouellun had dispatched him from Treff Hartlog to Paris. M. de Montal, who had not seen his cousin since the dinner at M. Dunoyer's, was struck with the alteration in his appearance.

"What is the matter with you, my dear fellow?" exclaimed the count; "have you been seriously ill?"

"No," replied Ewen, "I have been rather indisposed; but I have called several times to see you, and was told that you were out of town."

The count colored slightly. "It was true; I have been hunting in Normandy these few days past," he said; (but this was false, he had spent the time in the little apartment which he had hired in the house of M. Dunoyer.) I am very sorry," he added, "that I went, however, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of your company."

"Cousin, you have it in your power to do me a great service."

"Speak! command me! I beg of you."

After a silence of some moments, Ewen replied:

"You are my kinsman, and you offer your services; I will trust you; and open my soul, in all frankness, before you."

M. de Montal was astonished at the solemnity with which this was said; he reached out his hand, and said:

"Speak without reserve; I am wholly at your service. What can I do for you?"

"Do not think me mad! Listen to me earnestly, and you will be able to comprehend my strange, and almost frightful, position. After the war of Vendée I retired to my estate, and lived in the solitude to which I had always been accustomed, and always loved. After spending some time in idle revery, my thoughts concentrated upon an ideal character: it was that of a woman, whom I could love. In my bed-chamber was an old family portrait of a female, representing a person of wonderful beauty. This portrait I dwelt upon with admiration, until this feeling merged into love, and I fastened its lineaments upon my ideal wife. In a word, I confess it, I became in love with this picture."

"But, cousin, this is a romance," interrupted the count.

"Yes, a romance; a sad, though absurd, romance, if you will. Nevertheless, I did love this portrait, madly loved it; my monomania became so serious that my old perceptor, the Abbé de Kerouellan, advised me to quit Brittany; I came to Paris, the change of scene and associations calmed me, and restored me to my senses; in fact, I began to look upon my former imaginings as idle dreams—when—"

"Go on; you know not how this narration interests me."

Ewen de Ker Ellio passed his hand across his brow, and continued in a low voice—

"Until I saw Mademoiselle Dunoyer——"

"Well, cousin, and then?

"Well, and then I found that she resembled, in the most extraordinary manner, the portrait of which I have spoken to you." He ceased, and gave his cousin a look of agony.

It will be recollected, that M. de Montal also possessed a portrait of this infernal woman, who had wrought such ill in the house of Ker Ellio. Strange, however, as was the revelation of his cousin, and great as was the uneasiness it gave him, he perfectly concealed his emotion, and answered, smiling—

"I understand you—or rather, I think I do. You are in love with Mademoiselle Dunoyer: and is it on account of this resemblance alone, that you have fallen in love with a woman whom you have never seen before in your life?"

"I am certain—that is—I feel well assured, that Mademoiselle Dunoyer possesses all the qualities of mind and heart with which I endowed the mystic portrait—the dream-girl of my imagination. I feel that it must be so."

"I hope so, indeed, both for the sake of Mademoiselle Dunoyer, and yourself;—but what can I do for you in the matter?"

"I have twenty times been upon the point of going to M. Dunoyer, and asking the hand of his daughter."

M. de Montal gave no sign of emotion, but asked in return: "Well, and what hindered you, cousin?"

"The immense fortune of M. Dunoyer, and the extreme beauty of his daughter—they seem so far beyond my pretensions. I have not yet been able to determine upon any course which would not expose me to the imputation of cupidity or inordinate vanity. Still, to such a pitch of folly does my insane passion drive me, that I am on the point of doing something which will cause me to be regarded as the most stupid or the most presumptuous of men; for I am no beauty, and can assure Mademoiselle Dunoyer but a moderate fortune."

"A very respectable fortune, say, cousin."

"Oh! I do not mean to disparage myself," replied Ewen; "but the fact is, I am neither attractive in person, nor can I offer an establishment which would equal her father's lawful expectations. To hope, then, to captivate Mademoiselle Dunoyer, would be madness; but, in time, I may awaken an interest in her breast. Now, here is what I propose—that is, if you think well of my project—I will go to M. Dunoyer, and explain my circumstances freely; I have no interested motives; for I shall, in advance, renounce all expectations of any portion with her; I will then ask him to allow me an interview with her in his presence; this granted, I will tell her all:—the history of this family portrait, my ideal love, the strange resemblance, and my inexpressible affection, presumptuous though it be, for herself."

"Your project is an odd one."

"I know it; and it may be a very foolish one—and M. Dunoyer and his daughter, ignorant that I carry a true heart under this rough exterior, unconscious that my devotion alone, ought to render me worthy of the happiness I aspire to—may refuse me. But you, cousin, who know M. Dunoyer, tell me: do you think he will be touched by my frankness? Ought I to ask the hand of his daughter in person, or will you make the request for me? If not, I shall certainly write him to-morrow, strange as it may appear."

The brief, firm, and energetic manner in which the baron communicated his purpose, convinced M. de Montal at once that he was in earnest, and that no time was to be lost in fortifying his own position. The first great object to be gained was delay, and to secure that, he bestirred himself forthwith.

We shall see, hereafter, the fatal progress that the count had already made in the affections of Therese. Through her unbounded love he had begun to regard himself as the future possessor of a brilliant fortune. The confidential communication of the baron, at once exposed the danger which threatened

him, and furnished him with the means of defence. His star was evidently in the ascendant. After a few moments' reflection, he grasped his cousin's hand warmly, and with the appearance of the most affectionate interest, said:

"Your confidence in me, my dear Ewen, is not misplaced. I accept it as a token of your friendship, and be assured I will not prove unworthy of it."

"Oh, I knew I should find a friend in you," replied Ewen, returning the pressure of de Montal's hand with emotion.

"You have asked my advice," continued the count, "and I will give it you without reserve. The story of your ideal love, the adventure of the portrait, and the resemblance, I fear, would savor too much of extravagance and romance, to suit the taste of such a matter-of-fact business man as M. Dunoyer; he would take more interest in the state of your affairs and the amount of your fortune."

"But the daughter! the daughter! would she, too, be insensible to the story of my love—romantic if you will, but none the less ardent and sincere for that?"

"I know but little of Mademoiselle Dunoyer, my dear cousin; but I think I have seen enough of her to satisfy me, that she possesses much of the cool positive character of her father."

"Is it possible! What! with that sweet but melancholy air—that touching voice—oh! it cannot be!" cried Ewen.

"I repeat, that I am but little acquainted with Mademoiselle Dunoyer—and it is possible I may be deceived; but as to her father, there is no mistake. Listen to me: confine yourself to a simple offer of your hand, and I will be your intercessor with M. Dunoyer."

"You are too good—too generous!" exclaimed Ewen, his heart swelling with gratitude, and then he added in a tone of despondency—"And now, alas! my fate is to be irrevocably decided; and what reason have I to hope that the decision will be favorable! why should such happiness be mine?"

"Why? That you might enjoy it, cousin, for who better deserves it? But you must not give way to despondency. I dare not tell you to hope, but I would by no means have you despair. On the one hand, you are of lofty lineage, possess a handsome fortune, and a good character. On the other, M. Dunoyer is immensely rich, and may have other views for the settlement of his daughter. I cannot believe," continued the count, with the hypocrisy of a fiend, "that Mademoiselle Dunoyer is capable of having any other wishes than those of her parents. See, then, the good and evil chances in your case are so equally balanced, that it is impossible to form an opinion which way the scale will eventually turn. Meanwhile, there is one piece of advice which you must permit me to give you, for I think it is of the last importance both to you and to Mademoiselle Dunoyer."

"What is it?"

"The commission which you have intrusted to me, is one of the most delicate and confidential nature."

"Certainly."

"If, then, you should unfortunately chance to be rejected, it would be exceedingly annoying, not only to you, but to Mademoiselle Dunoyer, to have the affair get abroad; for the world is exceedingly ill-natured, and——"

Ewen interrupted the count.

"Make yourself easy upon that head, my dear friend. No one living but yourself, knows or shall know of my proposition. I would not even tell my old instructor, the Abbé de Kerouellan, if he were here—I give you my word."

"Another thing. You must be patient. M. Dunoyer is very particular in his mode of doing business, and he would be likely to be especially cautious in an affair of this kind; he may think it necessary to send to Brittany, in order to satisfy himself, as to your precise position and the situation of your property. All that would take time you know."

"That is very true."

"Are you certain, then, that you can so far control your impatience, as to refrain from going to M. Dunoyer yourself, and attempting to finish what I have begun? because, if you are not, I should much prefer not to act; for my position, you see——"

Ewen again interrupted the count.

"I am incapable of the commission of an act so improper, so ungenerous—I give you my word for it. You alone shall present my offer, and from you alone will I receive my answer, be it for weal or wo. I shall not see M. Dunoyer until he has decided my fate; and if he decides against me, I shall leave Paris without seeing him at all."

"That may be well enough," returned M. de Montal; "but there will be time enough to think of that, when he has decided. Thank Heaven! we shall not long be kept in suspense. As soon as I have seen M. Dunoyer, I will come and tell you how he receives your proposition; and I trust I shall be able to make a favorable report."

"My cousin," said Ewen, seizing both de Montal's hands, "from this time forth I am yours; you have laid me under an everlasting obligation."

"On the contrary, I am the obliged party; for you have shown me how, by so trifling a sacrifice of time and exertion, I may win a friend."

"I feel, but cannot express my gratitude—be speedy, dear cousin, be speedy."

"Speedy I will be, in order to keep up your courage; and hope for the best."

Ewen shook his head with an air of despondency; a tear stood in his eye, and once more

wringing the hand of M. de Montal, he retired abruptly, without speaking another word.

M. de Montal watched his dejection, and then shrugging up his shoulders with an air of contempt, he thus soliloquized:

"Oh, simpleton! treble-refined simpleton! And it is me that you have chosen, above all others, for a confidant. Well! well! well! my star beams brightly now. Unless I am very much mistaken, this affair, properly managed, will help me amazingly;—let us see. The Breton, faithful to his promise, will not approach M. Dunoyer, but will wait for an answer through me; that answer he will not get for a week or ten days at least! and by that time I can bring matters to such a pass with Therese, that I shall have nothing to dread from the Vendéan—on the contrary, his proposal then will aid me, by bringing on the crisis I look for. But, stay, I must write to Therese. I must positively have an interview with her to-morrow. She will come. My appeal shall be put in a form which will be irresistible.

"Ah! continued M. De Montal, as he sat down to his writing-table, "I must answer Julie too. She is sorry, and has written to tell me so. True, she does not yet propose to honor me with her hand, but she proffers me her eternal love. After all, that is not wholly to be despised—she may serve occasionally for a little agreeable relaxation, even for a man who is occupied with Madame Dunoyer."

M. de Montal then indited the following epistle to Therese:

'I must positively speak with you to-morrow. A terrible misfortune threatens *our love*—which is the same as saying *my life*. This evening I shall be above, and pass the night there; to-morrow I shall expect you at my door. Your sister goes out at three o'clock with Miss Hubert, to take her daily promenade—feign a head-ache as an excuse for remaining behind. Then you can come up to my apartment without danger. Ah, Therese, my strength fails me—what a fearful blow! I can no longer see for my tears—I am in despair.'

"That will do," said M. de Montal, after perusing what he had written—a broken style—full of emotion—pathos—danger to come—mystery and despair. That will take her. She will come. The last time, she would only venture a few steps into the ante-chamber; and then such was her agitation at finding herself alone with me, and she turned so pale, that I feared she would faint. Fortunately, the profound respect with which I treated her, reassured her. She will not hesitate to-morrow, and we will see if we cannot get her a little farther. Now for Julie. Another woman, another style."

'You do not deserve, you wicked little devil, that I should forgive you. I ought to keep you a long time yet in disgrace; but I am too good-natured and kind-hearted. I will see you; on condition, however, that you do not for an instant allude to the foolish scene that took place between us. You verily made a fool of me, and I have laughed enough to kill myself at it. Day after to-morrow I will be in your arms.'

This letter written, M. de Montal dispatched the one to Julie and the other to the care of Mademoiselle Dunoyer's femme-de-chambre, Rosalie.

Nothing was more simple than the manner in which M. de Montal obtained access to his quarters at the immense hotel, which was partly occupied by M. Dunoyer. The doors of the court were always open, and when he had concluded his visit to the banker's family, instead of descending, he mounted to the fourth floor. At other times, muffled in a heavy cloak, with spectacles on his nose, he walked boldly in as M. Bernard, the lodger from the country, and came out the next evening under the same disguise.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PROPOSITION.

M. DE KER ELLIO returned to his hotel more composed in his mind than he had been for some days previously. If his interview with M. de Montal had not given him positive hope, it had at least afforded him the satisfaction of feeling that hope was not to be abandoned without a struggle.

At the door he was met by a servant, who informed him that a gentleman was waiting in the saloon to see him. "He came about a quarter of an hour since," said the domestic; "and, finding you absent, asked when you would return; I told him at five, and he chose to wait for you."

Much surprised at this visit, inasmuch as he had no particular acquaintances in Paris, except M. de Montal, M. de Beauregard, and M. Dunoyer, Ewen went at once to the public saloon; where, to his astonishment, he found the banker.

A visit from the banker, in itself, was nothing very extraordinary; but, when connected with the errand he had just been out upon, it certainly struck Ewen as a very odd coincidence, to say the least.

"You will excuse my pertinacity, in waiting for you, monsieur, I trust," began the man of business; "but, having something of importance to communicate to you, I was reluctant to defer it until to-morrow."

"Monsieur," replied Ewen; "I am entirely at your service, and I only regret to have to ask you to ascend a little higher into my very humble lodgings."

"No apologies, monsieur, I beg;—those who visit travellers must expect travellers' fare."

"Once seated in M. de Ker Ellio's apart

ment, M. Dunoyer said, with a mixture of frankness and gayety, "I have come, my dear sir, to put you in the way of making a great deal of money."

"Ah! in what way?" replied Ewen, surprised at his communication, but very indifferent as to its object.

"The means are very simple, monsieur. You have in my hands, about three hundred thousand francs, of which I am to pay you the sum of fifty thousand in a fortnight, and the balance in three equal payments at intervals of two months."

"Very true, monsieur; and you will recollect that I told you I might want to draw for the whole sum at once, if I succeeded in purchasing some landed property on terms that I liked."

"You did, monsieur; but allow me—the interest I feel in you, impels me to say—that in buying lands, you will make a very unprofitable investment of your funds. The income from lands seldom exceeds two or two and a half per cent net; while I have an operation to propose to you, by which, in four or five years, you may double your capital; I am engaged in it myself, and will associate you in interest with me."

Ewen had been brought up by his father to shun every species of speculation, and his aversion to it was as strong as ever. The funds in the hands of M. Dunoyer were the proceeds of a legacy which his father had received; but notwithstanding all this, it struck him that it would be a master-stroke of policy to accept the banker's offer, under the circumstances in which he was placed; so he answered him without hesitation:

"Monsieur, I did think, as I told you, of making another disposition of my funds, but I will abandon my plan, and embrace yours; less, I assure you, from the hope of any gain I may make, than for the purpose of continuing the very pleasant relations which have hitherto existed between us."

M. Dunoyer was so struck with this blind facility, on the part of the baron, that he could not help exclaiming:

"What, my dear sir! do you enter into such an operation without informing yourself of its nature, or ascertaining what security I can offer you?"

"You told me, monsieur, that the investment would be an advantageous one."

"Certainly; and I can prove it."

"What you assert is already proved to my satisfaction."

"Faith, monsieur, without compliment I may say, that gentlemen of your way of doing business are rare; but, mon Dieu! it will not do to trust all the world with such unbounded confidence. The credit and responsibility of my house is well known, thank Heaven!"

"Believe me, monsieur; I am neither so simple, nor so careless as I may seem; I never bestow my confidence without good reason."

"Ah, monsieur!" replied the banker, "You do me too much honor; people of your discrimination and liberality, are truly scarce; most folks are so selfish, greedy, and avaricious."

"Your profession, monsieur, doubtless enables you to see more of these ignoble qualities in the characters of others, than men ordinarily do."

"Ah, you are right, monsieur! you are right! My position, both as a banker, and as a father, who has a marriageable daughter, gives me innumerable opportunities of observing the cupidity and baseness of mankind."

Ewen trembled with emotion, his face became purple; he looked upon the ground and said nothing. His embarrassment did not escape the quick eye of M. Dunoyer, and he continued:

"Yes, my dear friend, I have a daughter—no great beauty, to be sure—and she is a little wild—eccentric if you please—but she has had the best of educations, under a well-qualified English governess, and there is more good than bad about her. I'll leave it to you, if there is not, M. de Ker Ellio: come, say what you think with true Breton frankness."

Ewen had by this time managed to recover himself, and he answered wtth sincerity and warmth:

"I think your daughter more than beautiful, monsieur; I never beheld a countenance so touching and expressive!"

"Now you flatter me, monsieur! but no matter, admitting that she deserves but half your commendations, she must be very genteel. Now would you believe?—the first question asked by the young gentlemen who see my daughter, is, '*How much will she have?*'"

"Oh! monsieur!"

"I see you are astonished;—it disgusts you; nevertheless it is the truth, I assure you. Now they know that I am rich, and that if I do not bestow an enormous marriage portion upon Therese, still, when I am dead, there will be a vast deal of property left. Well, they are not satisfied with that—no; they want to enjoy my hard-earned wealth at once: they cannot wait; no, it is the *dowry*, the *marriage portion* that they are after; they talk, and think, and dream, of nothing else. Oh! M. de Ker Ellio, a man with a marriageable daughter is sorely tried: I have much to distress me!"

As an accompaniment to this father's appeal, M. Dunoyer heaved a deep sigh; but never relaxed, for a moment, the keen stealthy look by which he sought to read the effect of his paternal tirade upon M. de Ker Ellio.

So improbable had it seemed, that he should succeed in obtaining the hand of Therese, and so preposterous would have been the idea that M. Dunoyer should, of his own

accord, offer him his daughter, that the baron never in the least comprehended the drift of the wily banker, but answered with perfect simplicity:

"I should think, M. Dunoyer, that with such a daughter as Mademoiselle Therese, you might make your own selection of a son-in-law."

"Is it possible I can be deceived?" thought M. Dunoyer. "But no; these Bretons are a thick-skulled race. I must tap him on the shoulder." The banker returned to the charge.

"Oh! I might make a choice, my dear M. de Ker Ellio; but to tell you the truth, for all that, I should be very much puzzled to make a good choice just now. You must recollect, that the happiness of my daughter—who is very dear to me—is an item of no small importance; and I am resolved not to bestow her upon any of our city fops, rakes, or profligates, who would lead her an unhappy life, and break her heart in the end. No! *the person I should like for a son-in-law*"—here M. Dunoyer expressed himself with such emphasis that the baron could no longer avoid understanding his purpose—"the person to whom I could willingly resign Therese, my dear monsieur, must be a man of distinguished birth—staid, correct, virtuous, loyal; unembarrassed in his property, with an estate in the country, where he would choose to spend three-fourths of the year—visiting Paris only in the winter months: for I must tell you, Therese detests the fashionable world, and delights in a country life. Strange, at her age to dislike Paris, is it not? But it is true; nothing could make her happier than to spend as much of her time in the country as I have mentioned—unless it was, to spend every other winter there also. But talk of that to your young Parisian bloods, who cannot believe it possible to exist out of Paris—bah!"

"Is it possible, Monsieur?" exclaimed Ewen; "has Mademoiselle Therese such a taste for the simplicity and retirement of a country life?"

"Has she, my dear monsieur? Why, she is a perfect little savage—a wild-girl of the woods. And that is what troubles me: it is so difficult, you see, to consult such a taste in making a settlement for her."

Ewen was unable to give expression to the deep, but glad emotion, which thrilled within his breast. He wanted words; he was mute and confused.

"He don't bite—he don't bite," thought the banker to himself. "Well, I'll throw my bait once more; and if that does not land him, then I have been deceiving myself all along."

M. Dunoyer again returned to the charge. This time he raised his voice, and, assuming a manner at once frank, hearty, and familiar, he began:

"See here, my dear M. de Ker Ellio; I am going to say something which you may think impertinent, because it is personal; but as it is intended to be complimentary rather than otherwise, I must beg you to excuse me. And this it is: If I were to undertake to imagine for myself such a man as I would like as a husband for Therese—a husband *for Therese*, mind you—I should not go far for my model. In short, I should select a man in every respect like yourself."

"Is it possible? do I hear aright? Ah! monsieur, I dare not believe—I am almost afraid to tell you, that I have dared to think—to dream of Mademoiselle Therese as the model of what I should best love as a wife."

"How—how? indeed? What! that great, tall, pale girl? And so you fancy her, with all her wildness and eccentricity? Why did you not tell me so at once? I know it is customary to make such a proposition through a friend; but the devil take all customs, I say, when the happiness of two beings who were made for each other is at stake."

"Pardon me, monsieur. Am I in my senses, or in a dream? I can hardly believe——"

"Ah! my dear baron, there is nothing to be surprised at. If Therese suits you, take her, with all my heart. You are just the man I should select for her husband."

"But she—she, monsieur? Ah! without her consent, yours would be of no avail."

"Listen, M. de Ker Ellio," said the banker, after a moment's silence; "with people like you, one may venture to show his hand freely. I came here purposely to sound you upon the subject of this connection."

"Is it possible?"

"It is true; and you may be certain that I should not have undertaken anything of the kind, without first ascertaining that it would be agreeable to Therese."

"Then she consents, monsieur?—she consents?"

"I'll guaranty her consent, monsieur; and she will be perfectly happy with you, my word for it. But you see, that, ignorant as I was of your preference for her, and uncertain whether I should be able to prevail with you, no formal arrangement has been entered into."

"But are you sure, monsieur, that Mademoiselle Therese will consent?"

"Listen to me. For her whole life long, she has had but one dream, but one thought, upon which she has dwelt with unwavering devotion; and that was, to live in solitude in the country, out of the world, alone with her books, her music, and her husband, if she could find one of congenial tastes. She is as romantic as the devil; but more than all, she is passionately—nay, madly fond of Brittany."

"Is it possible?"

"It is true. Romantic and simple thing that she is, during the whole of the last fall she has talked of nothing but the shores, and rocks, and heaths of Brittany. You may imagine how amusing it was to us, to hear

her talk of rocks and heaths to the dandies and lions of Paris!"

"Monsieur," interrupted Ewen, "if Mademoiselle Therese will agree to give me her hand——"

"I tell you, it is agreed upon already."

"Then, monsieur, I shall owe you—I shall owe her—more than life itself. When you hear the mysterious circumstances connected with this marriage, which even now I am afraid to believe in, you will acknowledge that it is an especial interposition of Providence for my good, and, I doubt not, for that of Mademoiselle Therese."

"How! what circumstances do you refer to?"

"Allow me to reserve my explanation, monsieur, until you present me to your daughter: then, before you and her, I will recount my strange story; and I trust she will be able to appreciate the gratitude which I feel for the preference with which she honors me. And now, monsieur, to give you some idea of my delight and surprise at what has taken place, let me tell you, that I had but just returned from the house of M. de Montal, who was to have done me the honor to have made my proposals to you for the hand of your daughter to-morrow."

"A singular coincidence, indeed; and, what is still more strange, monsieur, I called upon the count yesterday, to ask him to break the affair to you on my behalf. I did not know that he was to return so soon from the country, where they told me he had gone; and so, as I had some business which rendered it necessary for me to have an interview, I thought I would open the subject to you myself; and very glad I am that I have done so."

"Now, monsieur, one word more—only one word, upon the disagreeable subject of portion. I must make one condition, and this I will adhere to inexorably—I shall receive no marriage portion with your daughter. My estate yields me an income of fifteen thousand per annum. This, with the proceeds of what I have in your hands, will enable us to live as well as any in Brittany. I have some sixty thousand francs of savings in the hands of my agent at Rennes, which will be sufficient to furnish my old chateau in a style worthy of its new mistress. Such is my fortune: moderate enough, it is true; but large enough, unless I misjudge her, to gratify all the wants of Mademoiselle Therese."

"Well, there is no other way, than to let you gentlemen of such delicate and refined sentiments do as you please—I see that; and I will not oppose your wishes, my dear M. de Ker Ellio, or rather, my dear son-in-law, if I may be permitted to call you so."

"Hold! hold! monsieur; you make me too happy. I tremble lest something—no, no, I cannot believe that such rapture is in store for me!"

"Why, what is there so extraordinary in this affair? You are a good match for Therese—you like her—I like you."

"Yes, yes, I understand: but if you only knew what reason I had to think my good fortune extraordinary——"

"Oh! well, so much the better, then, if you think so. But do you know, that I perceived that you were a little taken with Therese when you first saw her at dinner the other day?—a little taken, I say; but, mon Dieu! I had no idea that your passion for her was so intense. I'm rather a sharp-sighted old fellow, you see. Now, then, to-morrow evening at nine, I will present you to my family as my future son-in-law; and then we will arrange the marriage contract, and settle some other formalities, which, I have no doubt, we can agree upon without difficulty. So adieu, my dear Ker Ellio. I had some vague hopes of this result when I entered this house; but I had no idea that they would be so promptly realized."

"And you really do believe, monsieur, that Mademoiselle Therese——"

"Now, now, don't ask me to say anything more—have some compassion on the poor girl's modesty, at least, you gay deceiver," replied M. Dunoyer, with a meaning smile; "don't forget to-morrow evening, at nine."

The banker departed, and left Ewen almost stupefied with joyous emotions, which we shall not undertake to describe.

The first thing that he did, was to hurry to the house of M. de Montal. He had not forfeited his agreement with him, but he was anxious to explain to him that a most unexpected circumstance had rendered his services unnecessary. The count was not at home; and the servant informed Ewen that it was doubtful whether he would return that night. The latter left a note, requesting him to call at his hotel early the next morning.

A few words, now, in explanation of the banker's sudden and off-handed proposal to Ewen. Notwithstanding his great wealth, M. Dunoyer was, at times, what, in financial dialect, is termed *short*. The heavy operations in which he engaged, sometimes called for the use of all his disposable means; and it so happened, that the payment of the very considerable sum due to M. de Ker Ellio, seemed likely to embarrass him seriously, although he had, himself, proffered to meet the whole amount on demand.

M. Dunoyer, as has already been said, observed, at the time, the impression that Therese produced upon the young baron. A thought struck him at once, which he speedily dismissed as absurd, but subsequently recalled, as worthy of further consideration. Before long, that thought resolved itself into a very feasible project; which was, to marry Therese to Ewen de Ker Ellio.

This union presented many advantages to M. Achille Dunoyer. The idea of marrying

Therese without a dowry—of getting rid of this child, whose presence was a constant remembrancer of dishonor; and the probability of his retaining the management of M. de Ker Ellio's funds for an indefinite period, instead of being obliged to surrender them at once—these things prompted him to speedy and decisive action.

M Dunoyer was one of those people who, by dint of precept and practice, early learn to divide mankind into two classes—rogues and dupes; and no sooner had he set his eyes upon M. de Ker Ellio, than he ranked him in the latter category.

According to M. Achille's theory, then, if Ewen was simply smitten with the beauty of Therese, he would be glad enough to marry her, without troubling himself about her portion. In this he was correct. As to the character of M. de Ker Ellio, that was the last thing that the banker concerned himself about; if he even thought of it, it was only to call to mind an old saying of his father's: "Such sort of people are a great deal too honest for their own good."

We have seen how well M. Dunoyer succeeded with his undertaking hitherto, and how fully Ewen had anticipated his utmost expectations, upon those points which he deemed most important. But, unhappily, there were other and insurmountable obstacles to the success of the banker's projects. Therese Dunoyer was passionately in love with M. de Montal; and already her ruin, her dishonor, depended solely upon a man whose principles even Mademoiselle Julie did not think good enough to induce her to marry him.

We have already dwelt sufficiently upon the romantic character of Mademoiselle Dunoyer, her ill-directed course of reading, and the cruelty and injustice of her parents, as furnishing some excuse for the errors into which she had fallen. Since their first interview, M. de Montal had exhibited none of those traits of fashionable libertinism which M. Dunoyer had dwelt upon with such zest. The count had readily perceived, that anything of that kind would only disgust Therese, whose beau-ideal of perfection was the melancholy and romantic René.

We have remarked, that M. de Montal, taking his cue from the discovery which he had made of Therese's course of reading, had assumed a pensive and sorrow-stricken air, which had made the deeper impression upon the poor girl, because so entirely at variance with the portrait her father had drawn of his new friend.

M. de Montal lacked neither policy nor penetration; he soon discovered that Therese was a girl of noble and generous instincts, rather than of fixed principle; that her ideas had been inflated by her injudicious reading; that she had become, in a measure, reckless from ill-treatment, and that it had been impossible for her to have any confidence in, or respect for, her father or mother. In a word, the count had seen at a glance, what a fearful influence he could obtain over this poor girl, left as she was entirely to herself, and wholly unprotected from the snares he might set for her.

His aim was, first to win her affections, and then to seduce her; and he succeeded. Wholly neglected by her mother, Therese had never met a man who could compare with M. de Montal; and then he smiled so sadly and so sweetly upon her; he comprehended and assimilated so to the poetical character of René, that it seemed as if a new world, with new hopes and new pleasures, was opened to her, and she was no longer alone in spirit. Then M. de Montal had, for her sake, abandoned a woman whom the whole fashionable world was mad in pursuit of, and spent whole days in solitude, in a mean lodging, that he might be near her. Yes; this man, so elegant and so rechérche, had deserted his convenient abode and gay acquaintances, that he might taste the supreme happiness of being under the same roof with his Therese; and was not his love also as ardent as it was honorable? He had not made his proposal to the banker, because he wished first to satisfy himself of her love—he would only marry for love, and that love must be as passionate as her own.

'Tis unnecessary to say, that the man whom we have seen descend to such baseness, such subserviency, such low cunning, and such an affectation of unbounded attachment, to obtain the hand, or rather, the purse of the fair but frail Julie; a man who had not hesitated to prostitute even the memory of his mother to effect his unworthy designs: in a word, that M. de Montal—whose whole life had been one tissue of fraud and dissimulation, who was capable of resorting to every artifice, or descending to any trick—could meet with no difficulty in beguiling a young and inexperienced heart, which, sorely wounded by unkindness, grasped, with avidity, at the first offering of affection; and was as grateful for being permitted to love, as for the love that was lavished upon her.

Few young girls—alas! but few—if placed in the situation of poor Therese, would have been able to have resisted the allurements which were held out to her; especially, when those allurements were accompanied by professions of the most honorable intent.

In order fully to understand the secret of M. de Montal's success, and, indeed, of the success of most men like him—which seems so astonishing, when their entire deficiency in all really desirable or valuable qualities, is taken into consideration—it must be recollected, that they have acquired the faculty of appearing humble, tender-hearted, sorrowful; but uncomplaining, and devoted, even to the extent of servility. Such people please wo-

men like Mademoiselle Julie, because, as we have seen, such women make use of them. They deceive children like Therese, because the poor girls are full of pity, and always interest themselves in those who seem to suffer. We shall see presently, that it was by appealing to her compassion and generosity, that de Montal made the most powerful impression upon the heart of Therese. M. de Beauregard had foretold, precisely, the result of his connection with the banker and his wife. Monsieur and Madame Dunoyer, for a time, plumed themselves greatly upon their intimacy with the Count de Montal; and the banker actually did lend him some two hundred louis, which the count took a peculiar pleasure in expending upon his attempts against Therese. But finding that he did not reap all the advantages he had expected from his new acquaintance, and that his prospect of admission into the circle of the golden youth of Paris, was as remote as ever; M. Dunoyer soon waxed weary of being a *milch cow*, as he called it, and began by degrees to turn the cold-shoulder to his once admired friend, de Montal.

Indifferent as M. Dunoyer was to the fate of Therese, he would never have consented to her marriage with M. de Montal; not that he regarded her interest or happiness in the slightest degree, for neither he nor Madame Dunoyer took the least pains to conceal their aversion to her; but because he had no mind to bestow upon her even the smallest dowry, and he feared lest a poor son-in-law should be a charge upon him, and de Montal he knew was utterly bankrupt.

The count was by no means disturbed by the obstacles which presented themselves to his view. On the contrary, he doubted not, that they would further his designs upon Therese, by exciting her passions until they drove her to her ruin. Having at length assured himself of the unbounded attachment of his mistress, he proceeded to reveal to her the pretended secret with which he had so long tantalized her.

With a flood of tears, the count avowed to the young girl, that he was poor, even to the verge of beggary. He had (as he said) for a long time been depending upon the result of a lawsuit, which involved his whole property. The suit had gone against him, and his hopes were for ever extinguished. It was not property, it was not the prospect of wretchedness which appalled him. No! from all these he could escape by suicide—but it was the sore necessity of resigning his pretensions to the hand of Therese, which he deplored; for she was rich, and his delicacy of feeling upon the subject of pecuniary obligation, made their marriage impossible.

These scruples manifested themselves rather late in the day, it is true—but that circumstance never occured to Mademoiselle Dunoyer; on the contrary, her romantic generosity revolted at the idea, that any considerations of vulgar interest should enter into the calculations of M. de Montal; and she reproached him bitterly, for even recognizing the existence of such a thing as wealth, except the wealth of love—was it her fault, she asked, that she was rich?

The interview at which this avowal was made, took place in the garden de Monceau. Miss Hubert was indisposed, and Therese with her young sister had taken their daily walk, attended only by her own maid. The maid it will be recollected, de Montal had already won to his purposes, and she without difficulty managed to lead off Clementine, and leave the count and Therese tête-a-tête.

M. de Montal left the young girl sad, alarmed, and sorely grieved at the nature of his scruples; she passed a wretched night, and her love for the count was augmented to madness—by the dread of losing him by a violent death.

Nothing is more touching, nothing, we had almost said, more sacred than the sorrow of the poor but proud uncomplaining man, who bears up bravely against his trials and endures his privations with silent resolution. But the part which M. de Montal was enacting, to excite the pity and insure the affection of a young and rich girl, by exhibiting before her eyes the most frightful pictures of penury and want; by talking to her of the cold and hunger which he expected to endure; of the rags in which he would have to be clothed, and of the fearful alternative of self-murder, as the only means by which he could escape these horrors—was base and ignoble beyond all power of expression.

The next day after the interview, Therese, hearing M. de Montal pacing the floor of his little apartment, over her head, wrote the following words upon a slip of paper, which she watched her opportunity to put beneath his door:

"I must speak with you—wait for me—my sister goes out at three o'clock."

Notwithstanding, she was fully aware of the danger of the step she was taking, at three o'clock Therese entered the chamber of M. de Montal—terrified, and full of anxiety. She conjured him not to make her miserable for ever, but to go at once to M. Dunoyer, and ask her hand, assuring him that he would not be refused.

M. de Montal was very careful, this time, not to alarm the blind confidence which Therese had manifested, by any act of indiscretion. He soothed her as best he could, blamed her imprudence, and even entreated her to hurry back to her apartment—promising to reflect upon what she had said.

It was two days after this meeting, that M. de Ker Ellio confided to M. de Montal the secret of his love for Therese; and the same day, Ewen received from the banker the voluntary offer of his daughter's hand.

We have seen, that after this interview with the baron, M. de Montal sat down and wrote two letters, the one to Mademoiselle Julie, the other to Therese; and this last letter conceived in the terms that it was, and arriving at the critical period it did, could scarcely fail to have its desired effect. At three o'clock Therese was at his door.

The suite of apartments occupied by M. de Montal in the hotel of M. Dunoyer, consisted of three small rooms—an ante-chamber, with a cabinet on the left, and a bed-room upon the right—into the latter he conducted Therese.

Having closed the door, the count fell upon his knees before the young girl, and hid his face in his hands, without uttering a word. Therese, pale and trembling, sustained herself with difficulty, by leaning against the mantel-piece—her huge black eyes swam in tears, her lips quivered, and her bosom palpitated with violence.

After a silence of some minutes M. de Montal looked up—he was weeping bitterly, (the scoundrel possessed the art of doing so at will) he clasped his hands, and in a voice broken by sobs exclaimed:

"Therese! it is decided—adieu! adieu forever!"

M. de Montal, as we have before said, had a countenance which was capable of being modelled into almost any expression, and he was a perfect master of the art—when then, with a heart-broken and despairing look, he uttered those fatal words, "adieu! adieu for ever!" Therese was moved to the inmost depths of her soul, and her passion was excited to such a pitch, that forgetful of her alarm, she exclaimed:

"No! no! not for ever—I know not what you are about to tell me—I know not what evil impends; but this I swear—nothing, nothing, shall separate me from you!"

"But, Therese, I am poor, steeped to the lips in poverty, and when my present resources (already nearly exhausted,) are gone, I have nothing before me but the most abject misery and want."

"Oh! mon Dieu! mon Dieu! sobbed Therese. He! he reduced to that! Mon Dieu! pity us!"

"I admit that it is weakness—cowardice if you please. But I cannot encounter poverty. Think of it! Then to be cold, hungry, and houseless! And that through a long life, perhaps. No; I must die! Death—death is a thousand times preferable to such an existence."

"But me—me! What is to become of me, if you kill yourself? Oh! can you be so fearfully selfish, as to desert me? And all because I am rich and you poor, by unavoidable accident? Is it for this you will throw away your life and my love?"

"Therese, it would be an act of infamy for me to unite my unhappy fate with yours. A fatality has lain in wait for me during my whole life; and now, at the moment when perfect felicity is within my grasp, it exacts the fearful penalty of death! Oh! is it not horrible?"

"Hold! hold! Edward, you will drive me mad. Your cruel disinterestedness will craze me. I shall commit some frightful excess!"

"Therese—my love, be calm! In Heaven's name, be calm!"

"I will go at once to my father, and tell him all," exclaimed Therese, in a tone of desperate resolution which alarmed the count, with whose plans such an exposure was by no means consistent.

"Beware! Do nothing of that kind if you love me."

"Fear nothing, Edward; I will manage it with all discretion. You have said yourself, that you were never happier than in this humble retreat. Upon how small a sum could we not live, in some retired corner in the country?—upon almost nothing. Well, I will only ask my father for a bare subsistence. Do you object, even to that?" cried Mademoiselle Dunoyer, startled, at a gesture of dissatisfaction on the part of her lover, which she took for another evidence of the most insuperable disinterestedness. "Well, then, Edward, I will ask for nothing—nothing. I can work; I can sew; I can embroider. My education has not been as frivolous as you suppose. A woman always has some resources. And besides, Edward, you have talent, and you will soon find some way of increasing our means, although you do not see how at present. At all events, I can work for both of us. Fear nothing; love will give me strength and courage. We shall be under obligations to no one, and make up for all deficiencies, by a superabundance of our affection for each other."

"And think you, that I would condemn you to such a life of privation and distress? You! brought up in affluence, and accustomed to luxury? Oh, never! never!" exclaimed M. de Montal, frightened at the unbounded disinterestedness of the young girl. "But even if I were base enough to be willing so to do, it is now too late."

"Too late! What mean you?"

"The billet I wrote you——"

"Ah, true! You announced some new misfortune. Mon Dieu! what is it? Tell me quickly."

"Be tranquil, Therese. I implore you, be calm, or I can never tell you."

"I am calm—go on—go on. I will listen quietly."

"You have seen M. De Ker Ellio here?"

"The Breton whom you laughed so much at?"

"Yes. How do you like him?"

"What! I?"

"Yes. What do you think of him?"

"Mon Dieu! I never have thought of him at all. You ridiculed him, and that made me

think with regret of poor Brittany, for which I have always had a sort of instinctive love."

"But what did you think of him personally?"

"What a question! I scarcely noticed him; he seemed to me rather an insignificant sort of person. But why do you ask?"

"You must know that M. De Ker Ellio, my cousin, has an estate worth some twenty thousand francs a year in Brittany, besides a large amount on deposite with your father."

"Well? well?"

"And M. De Ker Ellio has asked your hand."

"My hand!"

"Yes; to-day he made me his envoy to announce his wishes to your father. Do you understand? You see, then, that all is lost, and I cannot profit by your generous self-devotion, if I would."

"What! because M. De Ker Ellio asks my hand? Why, you are mad! What mean you? Is it on this account that you tell me that all is lost? Is this, then, the misfortune which overhangs us?"

"And is this nothing?"

"Nothing—positively nothing. If you love me as I love you——"

"Therese, this language——"

"Is such as I ought to use, since you will not use it yourself. What answer did you make to M. de Ker Ellio?"

"I promised to do his errand to your father."

"You promised that!"

"I did. I feared that I should excite his suspicions if I refused."

"You were wrong. You should have said boldly, 'I love Therese, and she returns my love—her hand belongs to me.'"

"Therese, your excitability alarms me. You affect a recklessness which you do not feel."

"And will you make this demand of my father?"

"I have promised my cousin so to do, and I cannot avoid it without risk to your reputation."

"Ah! You love not as I do. I should not fear the risk to my reputation. But since your word is gone forth, you must redeem it, and ask my hand, then, for this lover at first sight."

"Your father is known to be so rich, Therese."

"Yes; it is the rich banker's daughter, that the Breton wishes to marry, I doubt not."

"Well; I shall ask your hand of your father for my cousin."

"My father will inform me, and I shall tell him that I will wed no one but you."

"Alas! Therese! Your father, seeing on the one hand a man, rich, economical, and acquainted with business; on the other, an unfortunate gentleman reduced to poverty ——"

"Will prefer your cousin to you, undoubtedly."

"Alas! it is but too true."

"And I shall prefer you to your cousin—which seeing that my hand is my own, is a matter of greater importance still."

"But your father will persist."

"But my resolution will be unshaken."

"He will abuse you."

"Let him."

"He will shut his doors upon me."

"Then I will come to you and say—Edward, I am yours—your wife; dispose of me as you will."

"And if I refuse to unite my wretched lot with yours."

"If you refuse?"

"Yes."

"If you refuse; that is, if you determine not to live in poverty, but take your own life."

M. de Montal hung down his head and was silent.

"I understand you. You will destroy yourself, rather than accept the devotion of a woman, who offers to share her wealth with you if you will, or share your poverty with you, if you prefer that she should do that."

"Therese, you have no pity for me."

"And you—what do you? My life, my heart, my soul, are all bound up in you, and you will kill yourself. Then I will die also."

"Therese—"

"I mean what I say. You know me—you have seen my resolution. At this very moment am I not here in your own bed-chamber at the risk of my reputation, which is dearer to me than life? Judge, then, what I will do, if the man for whom I make this sacrifice shall basely destroy himself."

"Basely, Therese!"

"Yes, basely! for you distrust my love.

It is impossible to describe the lofty energy of Therese, as she pronounced these words.

M. de Montal allowed himself to be overcome—to be vanquished by her resolution. In a transport of love, most admirably feigned, he exclaimed—

"Therese, you have conquered. Oh, that I were worthy of such wonderful devotion! but I will strive to emulate your generous courage—I will endeavor to deserve your love; henceforth, come weal or wo, I have but one object, but one wish, one hope, and that is to be united to you for ever. Yes, Therese, I swear to you by an oath, which I have never broken, by the memory of my poor mother, happen what may, I am yours forever."

"And I," cried Therese, with real rapture, "who know of nothing more holy, more sacred, than my love for you, I swear by that never to be anothers."

Her eyes brilliant with joy, she extended her hands to M. de Montal, who took them, and, with execrable hypocrisy, raised his eyes to Heaven and pronounced these solemn words—

"Shade of my mother, look down from Heaven and bless this betrothal."

After this, he carried the wretched farce still further, by placing upon her finger the ring which he had formerly offered to Julia, and saying, with a broken voice and eyes running over with tears—

"Therese, in my poverty I have managed to retain one inestimable treasure—the ring which my dying mother gave me with her blessing; take it, Therese, and let it be the pledge of my solemn faith."

"Oh, now indeed you love me as I love you, else how could you part with this so sacred memento? I will strive to deserve it. I accept it," said Therese, kissing the ring with equal respect and gratitude. "Now, Edward," she added, "before God and before your mother I am your wife."

At this moment the rumbling of a carriage was heard, as it drove through the port-cochére.

"It is my father," exclaimed the startled Therese. "He may send for me."

"Hasten down, then, my love, quickly, and remember———"

"That I am yours."

"And I thine, Therese, thine for ever; but give me a few days for reflection, as to what course we had best pursue, and in the meantime say nothing to your father."

"Fear not, my Edward, it is my duty to obey you now in all things."

"To-morrow, at three o'clock, my dear Therese, I will tell you what I have resolved upon. Will you be here?"

"Will I, Edward? Yes, yes, now I can come without fear or shame," said the young girl, displaying the ring and kissing it with animation.

"Angelic girl!" exclaimed M. de Montal, kneeling at her feet and covering her hands with kisses.

Therese, with charming grace, bent gently forward, and with her lips touched lightly the forehead of M. de Montal; then, in a low voice, she whispered—

"This first kiss, my Edward, in the sacred name of your mother."

She opened the door and disappeared.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE OFFER OF MARRIAGE.

About two o'clock of the day succeeding that of the last interview between Therese and De Montal, the young girl was summoned to the presence of her father. Accompanied by Miss Hubert, she accordingly went below

Contrary to custom, she found Madam Dunoyer in her father's cabinet, and the latter having dismissed Miss Hubert, Therese was left alone with her parents, whose grave and almost stern demeanor caused her no small alarm.

M. Dunoyer having ascertained that no one was within hearing, closed the door, and taking his seat, addressed his daughter in a manner at once authoritative and sententious.

"Notwithstanding you scarcely deserve it at our hands, (he began) your mother and I am about to give you a new mark of the interest we take in your welfare."

"Heaven grant she may not receive it with the same ingratitude that she has shown for our other favors," observed Madame Dunoyer, spitefully. Something had occurred to remind her husband of the dishonor attending the birth of this unhappy child, and her mother seized the opportunity to appease the banker by manifesting her ill-will toward her daughter.

Therese was too much accustomed to such brutality to affect the least surprise. As was her custom, she merely looked down and was silent.

"What did I tell you?" exclaimed Madame Dunoyer; "look at her; there she sits, mute as a fish; that is the way she receives all the kind things that are said to or done for her."

"The fact is, Therese," said M. Dunoyer, "you have a habit of making no answer when you are reproved. There is nothing more offensive than such an obstinate deportment."

"Do you hear what is said to you?" cried Madame Heloise; "see the sullen thing, with her nose between her knees."

Therese raised her head, and looked sorrowfully upon her mother.

"Hum!" muttered the latter; "it takes you to play the hypocrite."

"You are very severe upon me, mother," said Therese, in a sad tone of voice.

"You had better add—'and very unjust.'"

"Be calm, Heloise," said the banker; "if she intends any impertinence, she will repent it, when she knows what a kindness we intend her."

There are people—and M. Dunoyer and his wife were of the number—who cannot even confer a favor with a good grace, and as the progress of this interview will show. The banker and his lady, notwithstanding the harshness of their commencement, really thought they were about to announce something which would be very agreeable to their daughter. The ill-humor of Madame Dunoyer might, indeed, have been partly attributed to the jealousy she felt in seeing her daughter so well provided for.

M. Dunoyer continued with redoubled solemnity: "You are, now, Therese, eighteen years of age—in a word, you are marriageable."

The young girl's heart beat violently; but she collected all her strength for the encounter.

"Yes," continued the banker, "you are old enough to be married; and by very great

good fortune, we have found a match for you; a match beyond anything you had a right to expect."

"Yes—a much better match than you deserve," repeated Madame Dunoyer, overflowing with spite and jealousy.

As soon as your banns are published, you will be married," continued M. Dunoyer; "and now I hope you are satisfied."

Then he paused, and both parents expected a perfect explosion of gratitude. What was their indignation, when Therese remained silent still.

"Look at her, Achille," cried madame, at last. "There is gratitude for you. Did I not tell you she was not worthy of her good fortune? But, monsieur, it is all a farce; she is delighted at the thought of being married; only mademoiselle thinks it becoming to play the duchess, and ill-bred to display the satisfaction she feels at having caught a man."

"Before I can be delighted at your information, my mother," replied Therese, "it is necessary that I should know to whom you propose to marry me."

"Propose! I propose! did you ever hear the like of that, Achille?"

"You use the wrong word, Therese," observed M. Dunoyer. "We do not *propose* to you to marry—we *purpose* to marry you. It is our will that you do marry; and that, because the match has been agreed upon, and it is too late to make any objections to it."

"But, at least, you will let me know the person you intend to marry me to, that I may judge whether he will suit me or not?" said Therese, in a firm voice.

M. and Madame Dunoyer exchanged a glance of surprise, and shrugged their shoulders.

"Well, if that is not too ridiculous!" exclaimed the mother. "I presume nothing short of a love-match will suit you, mademoiselle?"

"Do not answer, Heloise," said the banker —"it is enough for you to know, mademoiselle, that the person referred to will suit you exactly—he is young, rich, and noble."

"Yes, a baron! nothing less than a baron!" cried madame; "and my lady sticks up her nose at the thought of being a lady baroness."

"In a word," said M. Dunoyer, "the person in question, is M. le Baron de Ker Ellio, who dined with us some days since. And now, I hope you will show something like a grateful and child-like feeling. He has a handsome landed estate, besides more than two hundred thousand francs in my hands; his rents, alone, bring him in fifteen thousand francs a year. What more could you ask than this? In my opinion, it is a superb match. To-morrow evening I shall formally present to you, your future husband; and in a month, you will be married."

"But," answered Therese, whose eyes began to fill with tears—"but M. de Ker Ellio knows nothing of me, nor I of him. I have had no opportunity of judging of his qualities; and how, then, can I appreciate him? He is ignorant of my character; how, then, can——"

"Is it possible that you have the audacity to dream of disputing my will?" said M. Dunoyer, in a low, savage tone, as he approached his daughter.

"Now you see—now you see, Achille! I told you so; she is capable of anything," ejaculated Madame Dunoyer. "Oh! that girl will kill us, with her perverseness."

"The happiness of my whole life is at stake, and I am determined, not to enter into an irrevocable engagement, of which my heart does not approve," replied Therese, bravely.

"Do you hear her, Achille? Was there ever such effrontery?" cried madam.

"Therese, you must be mad! Do you suppose, that anything you can say will prevent me from marrying you, when I have found a match, that suits my convenience and inclination?—a better one than I ever expected?"

"What folly!—what nonsense!" put in madame; "refuse to be a baroness, with an income of five-and-twenty thousand a year? Why, who do you expect to marry, my lady? a prince? One would think that you had sprung from the loins of Jupiter Olympus!"

This delicate allusion to the extraction of Therese, was ill-timed. The banker knit his brows, and threw a withering glance upon his helpmate.

Madame Dunoyer regretted, too late, her imprudence; and fortunate it was for her, that in Therese, her husband had a vessel at hand to receive the outpourings of his wrath.

With nostrils distended, and his livid lips covered with foam, he approached the young girl and hissed in her ear, "It is with me then, that you would strive, is it?—be it so—but know you not, that I could utter one word, which would make you glad to hide yourself an hundred feet beneath the earth? Know you not, that I could crush you beneath my feet? Did you ever see me in my wrath? Behold!" and he seized her by both her arms and forced her to look him in the face—it was the face of a demon.

Madame, delighted to see her husband's anger directed to Therese, joined him in his reproaches and threats.

"Never mind, Achille," she cried, "we'll bring her around; she shall be humbled, or I'll know the reason why. Refuse such a match, indeed! We'll see, we'll see! Now to begin, she shall go to her chamber, and there she shall stay, with nothing but bread to eat and water to drink, until M. de Ker Ellio comes—and then if she does not receive him as she should do, wo to her! wo to her!"

"But no!" replied M. Dunoyer, "I cannot

believe it possible that she really meditates an open opposition to our will. She is not such a fool—she only wants to be coaxed, Heloise. Tell me!" he cried, turning sharply to Therese—"tell me, have you the audacity to look me in the face, and say you will not obey me?"

"I say," replied Therese, with astonishing firmness—"I say that I cannot, and will not decide at a moment's warning, to marry a man I know nothing about—and I say besides, that abuse and bad treatment will only confirm me in my resolution!"

"Indeed! and think you I have no resolution, also?" thundered M. Dunoyer. "Do you think, that when I have an opportunity of ridding myself of you, that I will let it pass unimproved?"

Coarse and brutal as the banker was, he could not help feeling a twinge of conscience when he saw the desolate and heart-broken expression which flitted across the countenance of Therese, at this cruel speech from one she thought her father. But his wife, with a soul more base and unfeeling still, felt no such scruple; and taking up the thread of discourse that he had left, she cried:

"Yes! to rid ourselves of you: Achille was right—that is the word, and a happy day it will be for us, when we are delivered from the presence of such a *mauvais sujet* as you are."

Therese was cruelly wounded; but these bitter words seemed to throw a new light upon the affair. She determined to profit by her position, and at the risk of exciting the suspicions of the banker, she exclaimed:

"Mon dieu! mon dieu! if all you want is to get rid of me, what matters it to you, whether I marry M. de Ker Ellio, or another?"

"It matters a great deal to me," replied M. Dunoyer. "Your marriage is a business transaction with me. M. de Ker Ellio has funds in my hands; and these funds, he has agreed (upon becoming your husband,) to leave in my hands to use as I see fit. Now do you understand?"

"But you are entirely too good to condescend to such explanations," cried Madame Dunoyer; "is it our place to give her reasons for what we do?"

"Certainly not; but I wish to convince her that this marriage must take place, not only because it is for her advantage, but because it is for my advantage—so that she may understand, that if I were even weak enough to consult her inclinations, my own interest would not permit me to do so."

"So, you sell me, my father, for the privilege of using this stranger's money in your speculations!" cried Therese, with indignation; "and do you think I could embrace a man, who would buy me after such a fashion?"

"Begone, wretch! begone!" thundered M. Dunoyer: "get you to your chamber and remain there! To-morrow, M. de Ker Ellio will be here; I will come and fetch you down myself—and we 'll see who will have their way, you or I!"

Therese, her eyes bathed in tears, stretched out her hands in supplication, toward her father and mother: she would have implored their mercy, but such was the bitter malignity with which they returned her looks of entreaty, that she could not humble herself to ask for pity—she raised her head, and with port erect and haughty bearing, she exclaimed: "It is war, then, is it? Be it so! God will never prosper those who sacrifice their children——"

"What audacity! what insolence!" muttered Madame Dunoyer, to herself, "ah! how that look reminds me of the most execrable of men."

"You wish for war, then, do you?" cried the banker, furiously; "take care of yourself—you will be broken to pieces——"

"You may break me, but you shall never bend me!" replied Therese, going toward the door.

"Wretch!" exclaimed the banker, "dare you speak thus to me? Know, then, in one word that——"

"Achille! oh, Achille!—for my sake, at least—not now!" cried Madame Dunoyer, terrified, lest her husband in his wrath should betray her disgraceful secret to Therese.

But the latter, in her grief, anger, and despair, had not noticed the remark of M. Dunoyer. She hastened out of the room, shutting the door with violence—only anxious to escape from the cause and the witnesses of her sorrow, and to inform M. de Montal of what had taken place.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE AVOWAL.

Let us now return to the humble lodgings of M. de Ker Ellio. The time shall be the day appointed for his presentation to Mademoiselle Dunoyer as her future husband—the day after the painful interview between Therese and her parents, which we have described in the last chapter.

Unbounded joy, like the deepest sorrow, is attended by a sort of feverish excitement and agitation. Ewen was not to see Therese till evening, but his preparations were made in the morning. Fifty times during the day, he went out without any particular object, and returned restless and unsatisfied; his countenance was full of anxiety and excitement: but predominant over all, an expression of the most radiant joy pervaded his features.

"Oh! how the time lags!" scliloquized Ewen; "those cursed quarter-hours seem so long. How tedious it is to wait for coming happiness; it is almost painful! hours of sor-

sow pass more rapidly, I verily believe. So Therese did notice me. She is satisfied with me; doubtless she was touched by the emotion I could not refrain from exhibiting. Her father consents, too. She will be my wife! my wife! Well, I think our good abbe Kerouellan will say no more about my senseless reveries, as he calls them. If I had not dreamed—if I had not invoked that charming phantom, I should have married some buxom commonplace country damsel; but now—it is herself that I espouse! Yes! my dream-girl in the flesh, and gifted with all those rare and endearing qualities I so much crave. Is not this a prodigy; it is as if some beneficent fairy had employed herself in realizing the wild imaginings of one of human race."

But we will not follow our love-stricken swain in his long soliloquy, for it lasted till night-fall.

A waiter knocked at the chamber door; admitted, he entered with a light, and, addressing M. de Ker Ellio, said:

"Monsieur, there is a woman below who asks to speak with you!"

"With me?" repeated Ewen, in surprise.

"Yes, monsieur; she asked for M. le Baron de Ker Ellio, which is, I believe, your address."

"Admit her," said the baron.

A woman, with a black hat upon her head, and her person enveloped in a mantle, entered, and saluted the baron respectfully; the waiter retired, and Ewen inquired:

"What is your pleasure with me, madam?"

"My business is of grave import," replied his visitor, handing him a billet.

Ewen opened it and read the following words:

"In the name of your honor and your loyalty, monsieur, I conjure you to follow the bearer of this note, without asking her any questions, to the place where she will conduct you. THERESE DUNOYER."

The baron looked for a moment upon his visitor with stupid amazement, and then said:

"Madam, I am at your service."

He followed the mysterious messenger, who was no other than Rosalia, the *femme de chambre* of Mademoiselle Dunoyer, in perfect silence. A fiacre stood at the door of the hotel, into which they mounted; and, after a drive of some length—during which, Ewen underwent the mortal agony of anxiety, suspense, and evil presentiment—they were set down at the door of M. Dunoyer. The night was dark, but Ewen recognized the house.

"Do not go up the grand staircase," whispered his conductor, "but come this way with me."

The porter, at the sight of Mademoiselle Dunoyer's woman, permitted her companion to pass without question.

Ewen followed the young woman up the back staircase, till they reached the floor upon which M. de Montal's apartment was situated; the door of which, she opened gently, and then said to the baron:

"Enter, monsieur; mademoiselle is within."

Ewen found himself in a room which was quite dark, for it was now six in the evening; in the adjoining chamber, however, was a light, and there he saw Mademoiselle Dunoyer.

Therese, pale as a corpse, and, with the exception of her brilliant black eyes, almost as death-like, leaned against the mantel-piece; the expression of her countenance curdled the blood in the baron's veins.

At his first interview with the young girl, in comparing her with the mysterious portrait of Treff Hartlog, Ewen had been struck with the physical rather than the moral resemblance of her features, to that strange original; for Therese, upon that occasion, had a sweet and modest, though somewhat sad and melancholy bearing. But now, in her imperious, lofty, and contemptuous glance, he recognized the ill-omened regard of the evil angel of his house; and his superstitious feeling, once more aroused, mingled with the other painful emotions which agitated his mind, and gave him a look at once embarrassed, wild, and haggard.

After some moments of silence, Therese addressed him in a sharp and irritated tone of voice:

"Do you know where you are, monsieur?"

"In the apartment which you occupy with your sister, I presume, mademoiselle," replied the baron.

Therese smiled bitterly.

"You are in the apartment of M. de Montal."

"In the apartment of M. de Montal! really, mademoiselle, I do not comprehend ——"

"I tell you, monsieur—you, who would purchase me as you would a dumb brute of my father—that I am in the apartment of M. de Montal."

"Mademoiselle!"

"You perceive, monsieur, that your bargain cannot be carried into effect. M. de Montal was here with me but an hour since."

"But M. de Montal does not reside here!" cried Ewen."

"You are wonderfully hard of understanding, monsieur; but, I will explain: M. de Montal, for a long time past, has occupied these lodgings; and here he occasionally passes whole days. When I can escape observation, I come up and keep him company; in a word, M. de Montal is my lover. Do you still wish to marry me, monsieur?"

Ewen groaned aloud, and hid his face in his hands.

"Now, monsieur," continued Therese, contemptuously, "you have my secret. In an hour, my father and mother will be visible; go and tell them what you have discovered."

"Mon dieu! mon dieu!" murmured Ewen, feebly.

"I am not going to appeal to your generosity, to induce you to renounce your pre-

tension to my hand, monsieur," continued Therese; "but I tell you now, plainly, that if you persist in your hateful addresses, I will die! I swear before God! I will undergo a thousand deaths, rather than be your wife. I have already given you one example of my resolution; judge for yourself, whether I am like to do what I say."

"And it was for this, then, that you summoned me?"

"I sent for you, to tell you that I would be the wife of no other man than M. de Montal; but I fear even this will not deter you from persevering in your suit—*my father is so rich!*"

"To be suspected of such a motive!" exclaimed Ewen, in sombre despair.

"Suspected of such a motive!" repeated Therese, with indignation; "why not? Has your conduct been that of a man of honor and loyalty? Indifferent whether it would be agreeable to me or not; ignorant even of my character, feelings, or disposition, and without any affection for me, (for you never saw me but once,) you take advantage of my father's cupidity to obtain my hand by force—yes! by force; for it was not even thought necessary to ask my consent as a matter of form. I have been ordered, peremptorily and brutally ordered, to marry you; and that order has been accompanied with abuse and menaces, in case I dared to hesitate. You, monsieur, I look upon as either the author or abettor of the base treatment to which I have been subjected; and I tell you plainly, I hate you for it."

"How have I been deceived! Mon Dieu! how have I been deceived!"

"You are astonished, I presume, monsieur, that I am not too happy to share your wealth, or, rather, to increase it by what you supposed I should bring you. Yes, it is the daughter of the opulent banker that you wish to marry, monsieur; and you thought that you were making a great bargain by leaving your funds in the hands of my father, who would take good care of the interests of his son-in-law."

"Oh! misery—misery!" murmured Ewen; "what a fatality pursues me! My destiny must be accomplished!"

"You hardly expected to be so thoroughly understood, monsieur. But I have not done with you yet. Shame upon you!—not only unfeeling and ungallant to a woman, you must break your faith and forfeit your word to your friend. Yes! you promised M. de Montal to await the result of an application which you requested him to make to my father; and meanwhile, you secretly and basely seek to make my hand the subject of traffic, without giving notice to your friend, or regarding your promise to him."

"What! I?—I?" exclaimed Ewen, confounded at this new accusation.

"Yes!" continued Therese, with exultation, "And now, contrast your conduct with that of de Montal, if you are capable of appreciating such chivalric probity and honor. Know that he, although he loved me, although he knew that I returned his love, was about, at any cost or sacrifice to himself, to urge your suit loyally and faithfully upon my father; and this, at the very moment when you had broken your faith to him! Have you the presumption now, monsieur, to lay claim to a heart that already belongs to such a man? If so, your vanity must be overweening, or your stupidity unfathomable!"

As some excuse for this violence and injustice on the part of Therese, it must be borne in mind that she was still under the influence of that terror which M. de Montal's threats of suicide had inspired; that she was smarting under the undeserved abuse of her parents, and that she attributed all her sufferings and all her wrongs to the coarse and heartless selfishness of M. de Ker Ellio, who she supposed was ready to sacrifice every generous emotion to the love of gain.

The baron hung down his head in silence. There are circumstances under which explanation seems impossible. Ewen had fallen from such a height, that he had not the strength left to defend himself. He was literally buried under the ruins of his hopes. Crushed, stunned, he was conscious of but one thing; and that was the necessity of obeying Therese, and withdrawing all pretensions to her hand.

In his weakness, he had sunk into a chair, and there he sat, looking upon the ground, scarcely manifesting any signs of life, except the convulsive closing of his left hand, at intervals, as it hung over the back of the seat.

Therese regarded him with mingled uneasiness and contempt. She attributed his silence to shame; but it was not long before she experienced a re-action of the terrible energy that had animated her; and the reflection that she had so exposed herself to a man, with whom she was wholly unacquainted, caused a feverish anxiety and disquiet. At length, she almost began to be alarmed at the sullen deportment of one whom she had treated so cruelly.

The baron, at last, raised his head. His strongly marked countenance wore an expression of the deepest anguish; tears stood in his eyes, and his death-like paleness was rendered still more striking, by contrast with his dark brown hair. He rose, approached Therese, took her hand gently, and, looking in her face with a sweet but melancholy gaze, said, in a low tone:

"Yes, it is the same—the same cold look—the same bitter smile. Mor Nader was right: the flowers of the tomb alone blossom in the *black month*. Oh! fatal, fatal destiny of mine! it must be accomplished—ay, and yours, too, poor girl; but so sad—so sad a one."

At these words, pronounced by Ewen, with

accents of desolation and despair, which could not be misunderstood, Therese perceived that her anger and contempt were fast giving place to a new and undefined sentiment. By some inexplicable psychological phenomenon, she for a moment was made conscious, that the man who held her hand within his own, and gazed so sadly, but so sweetly, in her face, was the real presence of that ideal being, whom she loved, and of whom de Montal was but the phantom. A celestial light, for one moment, broke in upon Therese, and she saw the truth before her.

During the existence of this vision, as fleet and as brilliant as the lightning, the young girl saw her own image and that of Ewen united, beaming forth rays of calm and holy happiness. But Ewen's hand trembled within her own; the charm was broken; the curtains of darkness and ignorance fell over the scene, and she awoke as from a dream. Again she saw before her only a coarse and selfish man, who, intimidated by her resolution, sought to defend himself by base subterfuges and excuses.

What shall we make of this wild and fugitive impression, which the mind of Therese received for one moment, only to lose it the next for ever? Was it not one of those instinctive revelations which betoken the existence of sympathies within us, which we know not of?—one of those diviner lights, which sometimes, for an instant, dispel the darkness which hides from each other's gaze the hearts formed for each other? Was it not like a cry of delight springing from the soul, to which is discovered one single glimpse of that supreme happiness, which is the next moment borne away upon the wings of destiny, amid the clouds and the storm?

Strange as it may seem, not one gleam of this flittering and almost supernatural illumination remained upon the mind of Therese. She reddened with anger when she perceived that he held her hand, and withdrew it hastily.

This singular transition of feeling had not been unobserved by the baron—he had perceived the radiant glow as it passed across the features of Theresa—he had experienced her momentary pressure of his hand—he realized, as if by intuition, what was going on in the mind of the young girl; and then he also awoke, as from a dream, and all had passed away.

Returned to himself, and fully aware of his cruel position, Ewen now only thought, how he might most readily terminate this painful scene. In a calm and gentle voice, he said to Therese:

"Mademoiselle, shall I find your father in at present?"

"No, monsieur," replied Therese, coldly; "my mother and himself will return in half an hour. You wish, I presume, to inform them that I love M. de Montal, and that I am his. Do so, monsieur, I expected it—I doubted not that you would abuse my confidence when I bestowed it upon you." The indignation and contempt of Therese seemed to have gained strength from their momentary relaxation. "Go, monsieur," she continued, "I fear nothing—I have nothing to fear—de Montal loves me, and no human power shall separate me from him, or unite me to you, the author of all our sufferings! But for your interference—but for the hateful bargain you concluded with my father, he would not have refused me the hand of the man I love, and the only man I shall ever marry! Curses! curses on your shameful cupidity, which has brought down so much wretchedness on those who never harmed you!"

M. de Ker Ellio might be said to be in the full fruition of all the luxury of wo. There are some griefs so intense, that we make no effort to escape them. Many times he had been upon the point of asking the young girl, whether de Montal had spoken to her of the mysterious portrait, and the secret of his romantic attachment; but the excitement of Therese had scarcely afforded him an opportunity; and now he asked himself, of what avail would it be? and was silent. He had in some measure recovered himself, and was too proud for further parley. He left the room, sad, abstracted, and without uttering a word. Therese remained behind in extreme perplexity.

The baron returned to his hotel, and wrote at once to M. Dunoyer, that unforeseen and important circumstances obliged him to withdraw his pretensions to the hand of Mademoiselle Therese; and recalled him immediately to his house.

This done, M. de Ker Ellio sat down, and examined his position with the frightful coolness of despair. After a long time spent in sombre reflection and soliloquy, he concluded: "I will return to my solitude; she whom I love to madness, is as dead to me as the magic portrait which resembles her; but my love will only expire with my life—on the coming black month, I shall die or go mad, unless Mor Nader has deceived me."

The next morning, Ewen departed for Treff Hartlog.

CHAPTER XX.

VENGEANCE.

When Therese took the desperate step of writing to M. de Ker Ellio, she was already a ruined girl.

The evening after her interview with her parents, she was ordered to confine herself to her chamber; and, for the purpose of mortifying her still further, M. and Madame Dunoyer made up a party for the theatre, to which they took Clementine and Miss Hu-

bert. Therese profited by their absence to visit the count, who awaited her above.

That fatal evening, M. de Montal, taking advantage of her feverish excitement, and abusing her confidence and unbounded love, dishonored the unhappy girl.

If the conduct of this man had not been dictated by the basest cupidity and the most sordid calculation, it might have seemed more excusable, as he was on the eve of marriage with Therese. But the motive for this marriage was of so selfish and degrading a character, that his crime was not even susceptible of that extenuation.

The day after the departure of M. de Ker Ellio, (of which, by the way, M. Dunoyer was not yet apprised, he having waited for him in vain the evening before, and not having received his note before he left home in the morning,) the very day after his departure, we say, Therese, permitting Miss Hubert and Clementine to go out without her, betook herself to the apartment of M. de Montal, according to appointment, at three o'clock.

The count received her on his knees, with protestations of eternal fidelity, unbounded love, and melting tenderness.

"We are saved! Edward, we are saved! though it has cost me dear," cried the girl, throwing herself into his arms, and bursting into tears.

"What mean you, my Therese?"

"Yesterday, after you were gone, I wrote to M. de Ker Ellio to come and see me. Rosalie took my letter, and brought him here."

"Here! Therese? what do you say, *here?*"

"Yes, in this room."

"But why? for what?"

"That I might tell the man I was already yours. Do you think M. de Ker Ellio will wish to marry me now?"

"And you have done this? brave, devoted girl!" cried M. de Montal, throwing himself again upon his knees before Therese: "and what did he say?"

"Scarcely anything: he stammered out a few words of excuse, but he was overwhelmed with confusion; for I reproached him with his breach of faith to you, and his base attempt to purchase me of my father."

"You did that, my Therese?"

"Yes. My father, finding it for his interest that I should marry M. de Ker Ellio, would have been inexorable; but if M. de Ker Ellio himself declines my hand, what pretext can he have for refusing his consent to our union? especially as he is so anxious to *rid* himself of me. Those were his very words, Edward—but no matter; I am glad nobody ever loved me—it makes your love the sweeter!"

"Angel! be it my task, by my tenderness, to make up for the sorrows of your childhood. With you, I do not doubt that your courageous avowal has already destroyed the hopes of M. de Ker Ellio. He certainly was guilty of a breach of faith to me, in treating with your father, contrary to his promise; and he deserves his punishment. And now, my adored, as soon as we are assured of the withdrawal of my cousin, we will put the question, frankly, to your father. In the mean time you are mine—you are my wife—and there is no reason why we——"

At this moment a violent knocking was heard at the door of the ante-chamber.

"I am lost!" faltered Therese.

"The devil!" said the count to himself. "This is sooner than I expected; but never mind, her presence here will answer." Then, assuming the appearance of extreme terror, he cried out, "Mon Dieu! who can it be?"

"Oh, I shall die! I shall die!" exclaimed Therese, sustaining himself by clinging to her lover. "Yesterday, I braved all shame in order to save you from ruin; to-day—to-day——"

"It is your father's voice," said de Montal, who feigned to listen.

"Mon Dieu! have pity on me!" murmured Therese. "He will kill me."

The count opened the door of the bed-chamber. A noise of many feet was heard upon the staircase, and upon the landing-place, which was succeeded by a violent rattling of the door by M. Achille Dunoyer, who called out:

"Open the door, M. de Montal, open the door, or I will break it open."

"And no way of escape! none!" cried the count, feigning the utmost despair.

"Edward, save me! save me!" cried the unhappy girl, falling upon her knees.

"Messieurs!" exclaimed M. Dunoyer from without, "I take you all to witness, that M. de Montal is shut up, in this apartment, with Mademoiselle Therese; he refuses to open the door, and I am under the necessity of breaking it down."

"Down with it, Joseph! yes, down with it! Down with it, Joseph!" resounded, together with laughter, and hootings, and hisses, from some twenty people, who seemed to be collected to witness the denouement.

The door was shattered by a heavy blow from a mace.

Therese, bewildered, and thinking death itself preferable to a public exposure, flew to the window, and it required all the strength of M. de Montal to prevent her springing out of it, from that immense height, into the street.

Another blow, and the door fell with a hideous clatter. In the passage, and on the stairway, might be seen a great number of people—neighbors and their domestics—attracted by the uproar, to this scene, which M. Dunoyer seemed determined to make as public and scandalous as possible.

"Messieurs!" cried the banker, turning with malignant triumph to those who surrounded him, and pointing to Therese, who,

overcome with terror, lay, pale and fainting, in the arms of M. de Montal. "Messieurs! you see that, as I told you, Mademoiselle Therese was shut up here, with her lover; and now, if you will wait a little, you will see something else—you will see me turn the harlot out of the house. But, first, I have a word or two to say to M. de Montal, her amiable seducer."

A fresh burst of laughter, and shouts of derision, responded to the words of the banker. The count carried Therese into the bedroom. M. Dunoyer followed, and shut the door; and the three principal parties found themselves alone together.

M. Dunoyer cast a glance of cruel satisfaction upon Therese, rubbed his hands as if in the best of humor, and then honored the count with a waggish leer, something betwixt a sneer and a smile.

Therese, pale as death, was seated in a fauteuil. She held one of de Montal's hands in both of hers, and from time to time she wrung it convulsively. Don't leave me—don't leave me!" she faltered continually, in a voice broken by sobs.

The count alone, was in reality perfectly unmoved, for he had managed the wires by which this curious combination was produced.

Yes; the banker had received an anonymous billet, (*written by de Montal*) which informed him that his daughter daily kept an appointment with the count, who, in disguise, had taken lodgings in the fourth story of the house in which he resided; and that a very little observation would convince him (M. Dunoyer) of the truth of the statement.

Accordingly, M. Dunoyer, at three o'clock, observing the countess and his youngest daughter go out for their daily walk, inquired where was Therese?

"Indisposed," was the answer.

The banker then secreted himself in the passage-way, and before long had the satisfaction to hear the door of Therese's apartment gently opened, and to see the girl herself glide softly up stairs to the chamber of M. de Montal. He then summoned assistance to enable him to force the door.

The object of this infamous stratagem, contrived by M. de Montal, was very simple. He wished to be surprised with Therese, in order to force the family of his victim to consent to his marriage, for the purpose of saving her reputation; and it will soon be seen, that the hatred which M. Dunoyer cherished against the poor girl, enabled him to succeed in a manner far beyond his expectations.

"Monsieur," said the count, in a penitent but yet frank and confident manner, "I have done you a grievous wrong. Your indignation is just, but for your daughter's sake——"

M. Dunoyer interrupted him with a burst of ironical laughter. "Done me wrong?" he cried. "You have done me no wrong, nor have you excited my indignation. On the contrary, monsieur, I think you have done a very good thing. I know you have enjoyed yourself, and I am delighted—yes, perfectly delighted at what has happened."

M. de Montal heard the banker with unmingled surprise. He had expected reproach and even abuse; but no, there was not an inkling of either.

Therese was not less astonished

"Then you pardon us, monsieur?"

"Pardon you—I've nothing to pardon," replied M. Dunoyer, with a fiendish leer.—"You have seduced this young lady. So far good. All the world knows it—so much the better. Yes, the affair is so public that I was apprised of it this morning by an anonymous letter. Your cousin, M. de Ker Ellio, has doubtless heard of it also, for I have this moment received a letter from him, in which he says that sudden business has recalled him to Brittany, and that he is obliged to renounce the honor of mademoiselle's hand. He was too polite to assign the true reason why. In short, the dishonor of mademoiselle is noised about the streets."

"I have committed a great crime, my father," sobbed Therese, "and I deserve your displeasure; but why—oh, why did you drive me to despair by forcing me to marry M. de Ker Ellio?"

"Why? Why? because it was for my interest that you should marry him—but, Peste! I like what has happened a thousand times better—it's worth a hundred per cent. to me," said M. Dunoyer, rubbing his hands with glee.

"Monsieur," began the count, with great solemnity, "I am disposed to offer to you and mademoiselle, your daughter, all the reparation you can possibly desire. I am a man of honor and of conscience, and I repeat in your presence to Therese—permit me to call her so?"

"Oh, call her what you please—suit yourself."

"I repeat, then, to Therese, and in your presence I swear that she, and she alone shall be my wife."

"And I, my father, swear to wed no one but him."

M. Dunoyer looked upon them steadily—his ironical glee disappeared, he seemed touched, and said in a tender and subdued tone:

"Is it so? this disarms me. Poor children. After all they are a charming couple. Well, well, marry if you will, you naughty things, since nothing else will do, and the sooner the better."

"My father, your goodness overcomes me. Now I see the magnitude of my offence," cried Therese, embracing the knees of the banker.

"Yes, now we are indeed your children," exclaimed M. de Montal, putting his hand to his eyes, from which he contrived, after a

slight effort, to extract some tears; and then, that the effort of the tears might not be lost, he threw his arms around M. Dunoyer's neck, and repeated, "Yes, indeed we are your children."

The banker, who had only affected his emotion to deceive Mademoiselle Therese and de Montal, received the embrace of the count with a hearty burst of laughter, and pressing him with an air of mock emotion to his heart, he exclaimed:

"How touching and dramatic. Don't you think, de Montal, this is very much like one of the scenes in Robert Macaire? I represent Wormspire, and you—how well you said that. 'Oh yes, now we are indeed your children.' Oh, you're a capital actor, de Montal."

To Therese, these words of M. Dunoyer was incomprehensible. She was started by the banker's sudden change from the apparent tenderness which had deceived her, to a manner at once ironical and insulting. She foreboded some terrible denouement to the scene, and, rising, she took her seat in silence.

M. de Montal began to be alarmed at the ill-timed pleasantry of M. Dunoyer, and regarded him with unquiet expectation. At this moment a rap was heard at the door of the bed-chamber, and some one of those without exclaimed:

"Come, come! M. Dunoyer, you are a long time in there; we are waiting for you!" this was succeeded by shouts of laughter.

"The people about the house and the neighbors, are getting impatient," observed the banker.

"Oh, what disgrace! what disgrace!" sobbed Therese, hiding her face in her hands.

"I should have thought you would have come alone," observed de Montal gravely, to the banker, "if it were only for the sake of your daughter's feelings."

"Ha, ha! there we are—there we are, at last!" cried M. Dunoyer, with a new burst of sardonic laughter; and then pointing to Therese disdainfully, he said, "That my daughter?—now there is the difficulty—*she is not my daughter!*"

"Her fault—our fault, I should have said"—replied the count, "is a great one; but it does not authorize you to say that she is no longer your daughter."

"I did not say she was no longer my daughter; I said she was *not* my daughter!"

"Really, monsieur, the distinction is too finely drawn for my comprehension."

"Is it indeed? then I will endeavor to explain it to you," replied the banker gravely, his countenance gleaming with a detestable expression of gratified vengeance. "Thus it is; this girl is *not* my daughter; she is the fruit of adulterous intercourse on the part of my wife. Yes, it is susceptible of proof, that she was born three months after my return from an absence of more than a year. I have maintained her hitherto out of charity; to-day I shall establish her incapacity to inherit one-third of my wealth; and I shall turn her out of doors forthwith, lest she should corrupt my real daughter Clementine. And now, my dear sir, you may marry Mademoiselle Therese, or not, just as you please; I wash my hands of her. If you do marry her, I know you will make her the most wretched of women; if you do not, she will die of want and despair, unless, indeed, she take to the streets like some pretty girls in her situation—a course of life which does not present a very brilliant prospect for the future."

"But, monsieur," stammered M. de Montal, "this is horrible!"

"Horrible! you may well say it is horrible, monsieur!" replied the banker in a rage. Horrible, indeed! for me to have constantly before my eyes, and in my house, a child who is not my own—a living witness of my dishonor. You see I have had my share of suffering from her, monsieur."

"But I was innocent of my birth," murmured Therese, sadly.

"And what is that to me? You were born, and it has been only through motives of policy and convenience that I have supported your presence so long."

"Ah, monsieur! how much better would it have been to have abandoned me at first," cried Therese, bursting into tears.

"I had my reasons for not doing so. But, thank God! to-day the scandal your infamous conduct has created is so flagrant that no one can reproach me for turning you into the street—yes, at last your mother and I shall be rid of you. The exposure may be rather unpleasant at first for Heloise, but she is willing to encounter it as an expiation for her crime."

"My mother! will my mother desert me too?" faltered Therese, perfectly overcome.

"Ah, parbleu! are you blind?" cried M. Dunoyer. Have you not seen that your mother detests you worse than I do?"

At this last blow Therese rose up, calm and resigned; she extended her hand to de Montal, and said, "Edward, let us go."

These two words defined the position of the unhappy girl. De Montal was her only hope—her only refuge.

"Yes, I intend that you shall go," said the banker. "Not another night do you sleep under my roof. Your things shall be sent you in the morning—but where? at the house of this gentleman, I suppose?"

"Yes, monsieur, to my house," said de Montal, as much startled at the destruction of his hopes as at the cruelty of the banker.

"So be it—mademoiselle's effects shall be addressed to your house, and so you can commence house-keeping at once, my young bride."

So greedy, cowardly, and selfish was the count at heart, that his internal emotions every moment became more and more visible upon his pale and livid front—there M. Du

noyer could read, as if written in staring letters.

"Here I am, as poor as ever, with the addition of a woman on my hands."

It was by no means surprising, that one of these men should be able to read the other so perfectly. Happily for Therese, she was so overcome with this terrible revelation, that she perceived no change in de Montal. Fearful, from the calmness of the young girl, that his vengeance would not be complete, the banker sought, by a further display of his penetration, again to rend the heart of his victim.

"You seem confused and disappointed," he observed to the count. "Ah! by our lady, what would you have? You cannot expect to win always. The game was well played, but it won't do. One sees that—it is an easy matter to seduce a girl, and then that girl happens to be the daughter of a rich banker. Once seduced, he thinks, 'After the storm blows over, her parents will be glad to give her to me. There are only two sisters, and the banker is worth at least three or four millions; so that, one day or another, I shall come in for eighty or a hundred thousand francs per annum: meanwhile, they cannot give us less than two or three hundred thousand to live upon, besides pickings and stealings—not so bad, when one is on the eve of starvation.'"

"Monsieur! monsieur!" cried M. de Montal, furious at this exposure of his practice, "remember that I am in my own apartment; you are not the father of Therese, and I will not submit to your impertinence."

"Before you address me in that way, dear sir, I will trouble you to return the two hundred louis you owe me."

M. de Montal was silent—

"And then, after all," continued the banker, "I said nothing impertinent to you, I was merely stating a case. I said an interested person would be apt to make such a calculation; of course, I could not have referred to you; for you are so much taken with the beauty of this fair damsel, that ruined as you are, and expensive as as a wife will be, you are about to marry one who has not the wherewithal to buy salt for her porridge."

"Come, Edward—come," said Therese, smiling disdainfully; "do not think for a moment that such abuse can make me doubt your love. God be thanked! my faith in you gives me confidence and courage, even in the depth of despair. Come, dear Edward, they envy us our only good—the happiness we shall find in each other, even in poverty it is true—else, why would they endeavor to poison it by sowing the seeds of distrust."

"Monsieur," cried de Montal, "leave the room—Therese is not your daughter, and you have no right to abuse her; leave the room or I will put you out by force."

"Oh, very well, monsieur, I have no wish to intrude—but allow me one word."

M. de Montal left Therese in the bed-room, and accompanied the banker into the antechamber.

After a moment's silence M. Achille said to the count, "I owe *you* no ill-will, and to prove it, I will give you some good advice; have you heard anything of M. de Beauregeard, within a few days?"

"No, monsieur; but why do you ask?"

"I received a letter this morning from M. de Saint Luce, who accompanied him on his hunting party, to the forest of Breteuil."

"Monsieur, monsieur! and pray what is that to me?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. Yesterday evening the marquis met with a fatal accident while following the chase—he has but just inherited the immense fortune of his father-in law. The marchioness is consequently the most superb match of the day, though her reputation is a little cracked—but you don't mind such things—you are young and fashionable: faith I don't know, but I think if I were in your place, I should be in no great hurry to marry Therese."

And M. Dunoyer took his leave.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ATTIC.

A YEAR has elapsed, since Therese was driven from the house of the banker.

We will ask the reader to accompany us to a little lane, called the alley Fournier, situated near the barrier Vaurigard.

The miry pathway, the dingy color of the dilapidated houses, and the ragged linen suspended on poles to dry; all gave tokens of the inhabitants of this alley. It was near the close of the month of November—the weather was damp and chilly, and the sun was obscured by dark and misty clouds.

The last house in the alley was, by far, the meanest of the habitations with which it was lined; it was of the breadth of two windows in front, two stories in height, with an attic. The two first stories were occupied by a wholesale rag and scrap merchant, who kept a receptacle for the pickings of the chiffoniers; and the mass of filthy stuff, with which his depot was crammed, spread an intolerable effluvia, not only over his own premises, but through the whole neighborhood.

The third story of this house was occupied by a tinman, young, honest, and laborious. Pierre Ferand, by unremitting toil, was barely able to gain a scanty support for his wife and four small children.

It was in the afternoon, and the windows, glazed for the most part with paper, scarcely admitted light enough to enable Pierre Ferand to continue his work with hammer and anvil.

A small stove furnance (which was never used, except to cook their meals,) stood empty in the fire-place—beside it lay a scanty armful of wood: a miserable bed with a tattered cov-

erlet, stood upon the other side of the room; near it was a litter cot in which lay two children, and further on a cradle in which slept an infant. Opposite the work-bench of Pierre Ferand, was a portable commode of painted wood.

A woman of some thirty years of age, poorly clad, was employed with her needle; at her feet were seated two little girls, of the ages of six and seven, who cuddled against her knees, shivering with cold.

"Are you cold, my poor children?" said Augustine, the wife of Pierre Ferand.

"Yes, mamma!"

"When Louise and Justin wakes up, you shall lay down in your turn, in their warm places. It is cold! my fingers are so numb that I can hardly hold my needle."

Pierre, deafened by the ringing of his hammer upon the tin, heard not this conversation.

"I'll walk a little and see if that will warm me," said the wife. She approached her husband, and placed her hand upon his shoulder.

Pierre suspended his work, for a moment.

"How miserablely cold it is, Pierre; and so dark too, already; we shall have to light a candle soon. Oh! winter is such a drear season!"

"It is not the season for poor folks, that is certain. But your hands are as cold as ice: make a little fire, Augustine!"

"Are you cold, Pierre?"

"No! my work keeps me warm, thank God!"

"Then let us save our wood! One faggot has to last us a week you know, and here it is only Wednesday."

"But the children!"

"I'm going to put them to bed; the others are just waking up."

"But yourself, Augustine!"

"Oh! half-a-dozen turns about the room will warm me."

"Good wife! good wife, you are——"

"Well! and have I not got a good husband?"

"Ah! wife, there are people in this world worse off than we."

"Yes! and some of them are not far off either," replied Augustine, looking up to the ceiling.

"Have you had anything to say to that young woman, who borrowed some coals of us the other day, yet?"

"No! she thanked me very politely, but hearing her child cry she went up into her attic immediately; and I've seen nothing of her since."

"You ought to ask her if she wants anything!"

"Ah! I don't like to—she seems to be so much of a lady!"

"How comes it that she is so very poor, if she is a lady?"

"Well, she may not be, true enough. The chiffoiner's wife, who is always on the look-out, says that two pounds of bread and one quarter peck measure of potatoes last her three days, with two sous worth of milk every morning. Poor dear thing, and she nursing at that."

"Perhaps she is out of wood!"

"Like enough; but what can we do, husband? If we only had a little more than would last us; but we must save—save—recollect we have to redeem your great-coat from the pawn broker's yet."

"True! Happy are the rich; they are not obliged to shave so close: but what makes you think she is a lady?"

"Nothing but her pretty white hands, and her manner of speaking—they make me think so."

"But where is her husband!"

"Gone a journey I suppose, or else he must be a hard-hearted brute to leave his wife in such distress."

"After all, perhaps she is not married? may be she is some poor girl, who has been seduced and then abandoned: such things often happen!"

"True enough," replied Augustine. "Oh! those men—two or three months of pleasure, and then it is—good-by, you poor devil! take care of yourself—go to the almshouse, or drown yourself, or starve, you and your child—take your choice, the world is before you!"

"Such things do happen sometimes, Augustine. Only think of it, to abandon one's child. Well! thank God I'm clear of any such business! But this poor woman, does she work?"

"The woman below says, that during the month she has been here, there has been a shop-woman twice to see Madame Therese the embroideress."

"An embroideress, is she? Then she must be some young lady who, in better times, has learned to embroider for pleasure, and is now obliged to do it for a living."

"You are right, Pierre; that is it, I know. Oh! is it not hard? Poor thing! and perhaps she is freezing for want of a little fire."

"Yes; and see, it is beginning to snow. Oh! those attics are bitter cold."

"Well, I don't mean it as a reproach; but I should hate to lodge in an attic on account of my children. It seems to me I should rather part with some of my things."

"Perhaps this poor woman has nothing to part with. What's to be done in such a case? in an attic with no fire?"

"Oh! don't talk of it; you make my blood run cold!"

"Do you care much about redeeming my overcoat this winter?"

"I, Pierre? why, yes, on your account. You must have something decent to put on when you go out to walk of a Sunday, after your week's work."

"Bah! There's no great fun in walking out in the winter time. How much have you saved up to redeem it?"

"Only eleven francs and seven sous."

"Dame, that's not much; but it will keep us in wood for some time, and we can share it with the poor young woman above."

"Well, you are right, Pierre. The Bon Dieu will make it up to us."

"That is my own wife. Come here and give me a kiss, Augustine."

"There; but how shall I manage to make the offer to this young lady? Oh! I shall never dare to do it; not that she is in any way proud or haughty; on the contrary, she seems so meek, and sweet-spoken, and polite; but then there is something about her—I don't know what. Oh! I know I shall never be able to offer it to her."

"I'll tell you how to do it, Augustine. She came to borrow coals of us; you can go and borrow some of her in return. Then you will see if she has any fire; and if she has not——"

"Well, and if she has not?"

"Why, then, say whatever comes into your head. Bah! bah! you'll find enough to say."

"You are right, Pierre; I'll take my shovel and go; but, ah! how my heart beats!"

"Fudge! you chicken-hearted thing, go along; one would suppose you were going to rob the woman."

"Well, I'm going; but take care of the children, or they will be after me."

"Come here, young ones. I've done my work till the candle is lighted; and meanwhile I'll give you a ride, and that will warm you and me too. Hup! hup! you monkies," and Pierre, putting one of his little daughters on each knee, began to trot them, to their great merriment and delight.

Augustine mounted, by some rickety steps, up to the attic. The ill-closed door rattled and clattered, as the keen north wind swept through the crack between it and the door-post; and the kind neighbor, after knocking several times, pushed it gently open and entered. Oh! sad spectacle that met her view. The attic, partially wainscotted, had but one window of two small panes of green glass; but divers holes in the roof let in both light and snow. The whitewashed walls were green with moisture, and the chilly, unwholesome dampness added bitterness to the cold. An old trunk, a single chair, a little chest of drawers, and a white pine table, upon which lay some unfinished needle-work, and an iron skillet, were all the moveables in this cold and naked, but neat and clean apartment.

Upon a bed, poorer than that of the tinman, lay the senseless form of Therese Dunoyer, pale and frightfully emaciated. Her arms were convulsively clasped around her infant, which strove in vain to draw a drop of nourishment from her exhausted breast.

"Holy Virgin!" cried Augustine, "I am but just in time. The poor dear girl is dying of cold and hunger; her hands are like ice! Oh! what a bed! mon Dieu! and nothing but a shawl to cover her. Oh! wretched! wretched! Here, Pierre, Pierre."

After calling her husband, Augustine took the infant from the arms of its senseless mother, and gave it breast."

"What's wanting?" said Pierre, who had hastened to the door.

"Run, run, my husband, and get the vinegar and some tinder and wood; the poor woman is very ill; quick, quick."'

Pierre hastened upon his errand.

"What a miracle of mercy, that I thought of coming up," said Augustine to herself. "Poor little child! no wonder you sob. I could cry with you. What beautiful black eyes she has, and a little mark over the left eyebrow. Poor little creature! oh! how thin; how it has suffered! and the mother almost frozen. But Pierre is a long time coming. Ah! there he is."

It was Pierre who had hurried up, accompanied by his two little girls, one of whom brought the vinegar-bottle. The father quickly kindled a fire, and then turning to his wife said, "Is she coming to?"

"She begins to," answered Augustine; "now run down and light our fire, and put on some water to boil, and I will call you when I want you."

Pierre descended to his room; and Augustine, seating herself upon the bed, bathed the temples and nostrils of Therese with vinegar. The fire burned brightly, and the poor girl slowly revived.

"My child! where is my child?" was her first exclamation.

"There, madam, beside you on the bed."

Therese clasped her infant to her breast and covered it with kisses.

"Dear little cherub! how good it is; it only opens its great black eyes and sobs, but neither cries nor screams. How do you find yourself now, madam? Here, sniff a little more of the vinegar."

"Better, much better; thanks to your kindness, madam; but to what merciful chance do I owe this visit?"

"I came, madam—I'll tell you, madam—I came—to borrow a few coals, madam. I knocked, and you did not answer, and so I took the liberty of coming in."

"Oh! thank you, for my child's sake. I had lain down, I was so tired. But," she continued, observing the reflection of the fire upon the beams over-head, for it was now dark; "but this fire, where did it come from?"

"Pardon me, madam," replied Augustine, much embarrassed; "not knowing where you put your wood, and fearing that the child might take cold, I——"

"Excellent, kind-hearted woman! you are yourself a mother; I am certain of it. But I," continued Therese, weeping—"I am so exhausted, I can no longer nurse my child; it must die!"

"Die, madam? oh, no!—not while I am near you. Don't be discouraged; we will be your friends. We are but poor work-people, to-be-

sure; yet, for all that, do not be discouraged; I have raised five children in spite of poverty and wretchedness, and in spite of the sickness of my good man, who lay for a long time sick and helpless; but he did not go to the hospital, thank God. Why should you not nurse your little dauphiness too, madam? all she wants is a chance to live."

Oh! how kind, how good you are! How have I merited such kindness!"

"Don't say a word about it, madam. True, you are a lady; but we are neighbors, and neighbors should always be obliging. I can see you were not brought up to stand hardship and poverty like us; but we will help you to take care of your baby; it shall not die."

All at once, an unusual sound was heard in the alley Fournier; it was the rattling of a postchaise.

Therese listened with eager anxiety. A nervous agitation shook her frame, and a gleam of hope flitted across her pallid brow.

Footsteps were soon heard ascending the staircase; then the voice of Pierre, who seemed to be directing some one, called out, "This way, monsieur! this way!" Therese trembled with so much violence, that the frightened Augustine exclaimed, "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! what ails you, madam?"

The door was thrown open, and, by the light which Pierre carried in his hand, the tall figure of a gentleman was seen upon the threshold.

Therese gave one glance, and then, hiding her face with her hands, cried out, "It is not he! What do I see? M. de Ker Ellio!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE INTERVIEW.

After contemplating for a few moments, with emotions of mingled pity and surprise, the wretched loft in which the once brilliant and admired daughter of affluence had taken refuge, M. de Ker Ellio said a few words, in an under tone, to the workman who stood beside him with a candle in his hand.

Pierre handed his light to the baron, and left the room. Ewen stepped gently forward, placed the candle upon the table, and took a seat in silence.

Therese, recollecting the cruel indignity with which she had treated him at their last interview, shuddered; for she almost thought he had come to triumph over her misfortunes and disgrace; but presently, when she stole another glance at his face, she perceived that it was wan and sorrow-stricken, and that the big tears trickled silently down his cheeks.

"The little cherub will sleep now," observed the tinman's wife, "if you would only put him to bed." She rose, and drew up a neat and pretty cradle, furnished with clean and warm clothes and a green silk covering—the only article of luxury that the humble establishment of poor Therese could boast.

Therese, regardless of the presence of M. de Ker Ellio, put her infant gently in its comfortable resting-place, and covered it with care. Ewen, who followed her every motion with his eyes, was more and more struck with the ravages that grief and suffering had made in the countenance he loved so well.

When Augustine departed, the embarrassment of Therese increased. She had not seen M. de Ker Ellio since she had avowed to him her love for M. de Montal. She knew not the object of his return; but, from his tears and the benevolent expression of his countenance, she doubted not that his errand was kindly. The heart and spirit of the poor girl was broken; and so long had it been since even the appearance of sympathy or regard had met her eye, that she was ready to bless God even for the coming of this man, whom she had been taught to hate.

The Breton chieftain looked older, by ten years at least. His frame was emaciated; his bright eyes gleamed with a feverish light from their dark, deep sockets; his costume was of that maritime order which he so often wore at Treff Hartlog—betokening that he had left his home without even tarrying to exchange his dress.

He broke the silence. "Three days ago," he said, "I learned all. I knew that you were either dead or the most unhappy of women. I am here; but, oh! I had no idea of this!—no idea of this!" And his tears burst forth afresh.

Therese gave him a look of surprise, and asked, in a tremulous voice: "What did you learn three days ago, monsieur?"

M. de Ker Ellio started back in amazement: "What!" he cried, "are you ignorant of it?"

"Ignorant of what, monsieur?"

"De Montal!——"

"I am expecting him."

"You are expecting him!"

"Well! and what do you mean to say?"

"You are expecting him!"

"Mon Dieu! you terrify me!"

"He——"

"He is dead!" shrieked Therese, stretching forth her hand to M. de Ker Ellio, with a frantic gesture.

"He is not dead—no, nor in danger."

"Then what is it you have heard?" Why am I the most wretched of women? Speak, monsieur!—in Heaven's name, speak!"

"You must expect M. de Montal no more."

"Why?"

"You will never see him again."

"Never see him again?"

"Never!"

"Mon Dieu, what has happened to him? Where is he? For six months I have heard nothing of him; but I have expected him constantly!"

"And must this last blow come from my hand?" said M. de Ker Ellio to himself—"weak, suffering as she is—it will kill her."

"I conjure you, monsieur," continued The-

rese; "tell me what you have heard. Speak freely. Nothing can afflict me more, excepting, through my child. My situation cannot be more desperate than it is. If I have preserved the faintest hope of seeing M. de Montal again, it is only because hope never deserts the wretched, but with life."

"That hope you must renounce for ever!"

"Then he is dead!—You would conceal it from me; but how can you torture me thus."

"He is not dead—I swear it; but he is lost to you for ever!"

"Lost to me?"

"Yes, for now he can never marry you!"

"He can never marry me now?" repeated Therese, mechanically.

M. de Ker Ellio, saw with alarm how little she anticipated the impending blow. Vain had been all his attempts, to prepare her for the painful intelligence by distant hints and allusions. Therese either could not, or would not understand him. 'Tis said, that an instinct of our nature renders us hard of belief, or apprehensive of, those evils which we dread the most. Unwilling to prolong this trying scene, Ewen said at last:

"No! M. de Montal can never marry you! Forgetful of the sacred ties which bound him to you;—forgetful of his promises, of his oaths, and yielding to his cupidity——"

"Go on!"

"And having met with a woman of the vilest character, but of unbounded wealth——"

"He is married!"

It is impossible to describe the accent of despair, with which Therese uttered these words. With her head thrown back, her hands clasped, and her eyes fixed upon the ceiling, she sat for a few moments in silent desolation. Then, suddenly, the idea seemed to strike her, it was all a base deception. She turned wildly to M. de Ker Ellio, and exclaimed:

"This is not true! You are deceiving me!"

"And can you believe me capable of such baseness?"

"No! it is not true! You are deceiving me!"

"And to what end, poor girl?"

"To revenge yourself on de Montal;—or perhaps on me, in return for the abuse I once heaped upon you! Oh, no! I will not believe you! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! have pity on me, and my child too! it will be, like me, a bastard! a bastard!—neither a name, a family, or a friend!"

This idea, more dreadful to Therese on her child's account, than on her own, seemed to excite her to greater violence.

"No! no!" she cried, "it is false! I tell you it is not true! M. de Montal is not married!"

Ewen regarded her with the tenderest pity, unmoved by the violence of her accusations; but perceiving the necessity of convincing her, at this time, of the fatal truth; he answered in a voice, sweet, but calm and firm—a voice and a manner, the sincerity of which Therese could not distrust:

"Upon my honor, madam, and in the name of God! I assure you that M. de Montal is married."

Therese was convinced—she was overcome, she no longer resisted the dreadful truth; but, covering her face with her hands, and uttering a deep groan, she sat for some moments in sad and solemn silence.

When she lifted up her face, it was perfectly livid—in a feeble and broken voice, she said:

"I pray you pardon me, monsieur. I believe you now, I believe you! Go on—I can hear anything now! I will have courage!"

"Yes! I will speak! I will go on! You should have courage! You should forget a wretch so base, and arouse all your energies to live, if only for your child's sake."

"Married! married!" repeated Therese, mechanically, "and to whom?"

"To the Marchioness de Beauregard, at Naples, two months ago."

"The woman whom all the world has refused to receive! Ah! blind and foolish that I am, I ought to have expected this! All is explained now! It was for this he left me!"

"The baseness of this connection ought to console you, madam; it is nothing but a degrading bargain. The man has sold his name and honor for gold."

"But, this woman is young and beautiful," cried Therese, with returning violence.

"She is dishonored, madam; she is crushed under the contempt and disdain of society."

"Tis true! tis true!" replied Therese, humbly; "pardon me for the warmth of this last flash of jealousy. But you comprehend—it is not always the first shock, which is the most painful. We may be resigned, but then comes reflection, which is worse than death."

"You must forget him, if you would regain your tranquillity. You despise him now—forgetfulness will come with time."

Therese shook her head mournfully, and then asked; "How were you informed of M. de Montal's marriage."

"Three days ago, the Abbé de Kerouellan paid me a visit. He had a paper in his hand, and he observed to me: 'Your cousin, M. de Montal, is married to the widow of the Marquis de Beauregard.' I took the journal from his hands, and there indeed was an official announcement of the fact. The ceremony took place in Naples, at the chapel of the French embassy. Ignorant, as I usually am in my solitude, of what passes in Paris, I had been apprised that you had left your father's house a year ago, in company with M. de Montal. That you were his wife, I had never for an instant permitted myself to doubt. If then, he had married the Marchioness de Beauregard, what could I infer? That you were dead, or basely abandoned. I left home upon the instant. I arrived within the hour. I went to your father's house——"

"You saw him?"

"I did see him: 'Monsieur,' said I, 'is your daughter dead, that M. de Montal is married again? 'My daughter!' replied the man; 'I have but one daughter, and she is in perfect health, thank God. As to M. de Montal, it is true that he is married; I hear it from my correspondent in Naples; he has married the Marchioness de Beauregard. I'm very glad of it, for he was a fine dashing fellow, though dreadfully poor; but this match will set him up in fine style, again——"

"I recognize M. Dunoyer there," said Therese, bitterly.

Ewen continued: "'See here,' added, M. Dunoyer, 'I know who you are thinking of: some time ago, about a year I think, de Montal carried off from here a young woman called Therese, whom I used to permit to pass for my daughter, as I had brought her up, out of charity. The count lived with her several months, and I believe had a child by her. If you have any curiosity to see her, I can give you her address; here it is; passage Fournier—No. 17, barrier Vaurigard. Day before yesterday, this girl sent to my wife to ask some assistance for herself and her infant. It is the first time we have ever heard from her since she left here; but we had nothing to give her;—we all have our own poor to take care of you know.'"

At these words of the banker, Therese raised her eyes to heaven, and said:

"And my mother! my own mother, refused me bread! Oh! I asked her only for my child's sake."

"I snatched the address from the hand of M. Dunoyer, and here I am," continued Ewen. "At the sight of all this misery—but no, we'll think no more of that. Now listen to me; you are alone in the world, you have neither lover nor husband, father nor mother; you are abandoned by all, and were dying by the side of your helpless child;—is it not so? You are an object of pity and compassion to the poor laborers who are your neighbors, for the man who lighted me here, said in reply to my question; 'Yes, Madame Therese is here, and, if you come to help her, you are in good time; my wife has just found her dying with cold and hunger, by the side of her child;' this is true, is it not? Is it not horrible?"

"Horrible, indeed! but it is for my child I chiefly suffer."

"Yes, it is a dreadful fate for your child."

"Alas! monsieur, why do you dwell upon this frightful picture so? Is it generous? I was unjust to you; cruel, it may be once, but—"

"But now I have come to avenge myself."

Strange as these words may seem, they were pronounced in such a tone, and accompanied with such an expression of benevolence, that Therese in an an instant comprehended his noble and generous nature and intent.

"Oh, forgive me!" she cried; "my wrongs and sufferings have made me so suspicious;" and then relapsing into her former depression, she repeated again, mechanically, "married! married!"

"Why care for a man, who has so basely betrayed and abandoned you?"

"But my child, monsieur! my child, monsieur!" and then, sinking her voice again, Therese murmured: "'Tis fearful! but yet, perchance, God will not abandon this innocent little child; has he not already sent kind people to my aid?"

"And I, why am I here?"

"That is what I ask myself?"

"And you cannot discover?"

"You pity the unfortunate, I suppose."

"Pity the unfortunate! Oh, yes, that is it, that is all—nothing but mere pity, nothing more;" cried Ewen, with a bitter smile; "but did de Montal never tell you of a certain portrait?"

"A portrait! no, but what has that to do with your coming?"

"Nothing, nothing; perhaps you will know one day—but no matter, let us talk of the future. What are your resources? what do you expect to do? and how have you supported yourself hitherto?"

"I have worked, and I expect to work."

"To work, poor girl! you—alas! I see, we have both suffered during the year, since we met."

"*We*, say you, monsieur?"

"Yes, *we*; for I too have suffered much; as much, perhaps, as you."

"But why, monsieur?"

"Why—you ask me why? At the first tidings of your misfortunes, which I received, did I not hasten to your side? but you may well ask, for I have done nothing to change the opinion you had of me, when you accused me of seeking your hand from motives of the basest cupidity—is it not so?"

"Monsieur, at that time I knew you not."

"I do not reproach you; you were taught to think ill of me. I was grossly calumniated, and I had not the power to defend myself. But all is altered now, now you must know me as I am; you must give me your confidence. Yes, the time has come when you will have to say: 'He is a loyal, honorable man, upright, sincere: You must trust me, to enable me to do for you all I would," said Ewen, smiling.

"Monsieur!" said Theresa, astonished.

"Oh! I do not wish you to take my word for it," interrupted Ewen; "the good Abbé de Kerouellan will answer for me. Yes—you shall be convinced that I am not what you thought. My ancient servants, my tenants, my neighbors, my old soldiers and companions in arms, all, all shall bear witness for me. They will say, 'Ewen de Ker Elio is an honorable, an upright man; he has deeply suffered for the bygone year—suffered, so that we even, his servants, have pitied his distress; but in all his troubles, to us he has been ever kind and gentle, and he has walked worthily in the footsteps of

his father.' That is what they will say, madam; and that you must believe."

"Grand Dieu! monsieur; and have you thus suffered on my account?"

"Yes! on your account!—for your sake! Yes, you must know all I have suffered; and wherefore, that you may accord to me, at last, the reparation that I ask."

"Reparation! what mean you, monsieur?"

"When you shall know how basely de Montal has slandered me—when you shall know that I loved you devotedly, and had loved you for years; that even your cruel treatment has failed to weaken my attachment, or your calamity my respect. When you shall know the tears that I have shed—the sorrows that I have endured; and that you! you alone, have been the cause——"

"Ah! what say you?"

"Then you will regret the pain you have inflicted on me. Then—for you are by nature good and generous—as a compensation for all my suffering, you will give me your hand. Yes, your hand! You seem surprised, almost hurt. I expected that; but I am in earnest."

"Really, monsieur; the generosity of this offer is——"

"Is surpassed by its strangeness, you would say?"

"Excuse me; but as a gentleman of refinement, you must be sensible that it is possible for a woman to preserve the sentiment of self-respect, even after she has fallen."

"You would intimate that I am ready to profit by your misfortune, to obtain the object of my desires; and that to seek your hand, after what has passed, I must lack that dignity of soul which becomes a man of honor."

"If you are generous enough to forget what has passed, ought I to forget it? I have been cruel and unjust to you; but I was deceived; and I feared for the wife of the man I loved—but why speak of that? Your offer is as courageous as it is noble and disinterested, still—"

Ewen interrupted her.

"Look at me, madam," he said; "I am barely five-and-twenty years of age; and yet my brow is wrinkled, and my form bowed; my person may no longer please the eye; but my heart—my heart you shall one day know, perhaps. Were it possible to brave public opinion, I would say to you, 'My sister! come with me to my solitary home; your child shall be mine!'"

"Ah! monsieur! had I but known you! But now, alas! it is too late! too late!"

"If it were too late, I should not have been here. Were I to say to you, 'My sister, come, partake of my solitude—what would be said of us by the world? When I say the world, I mean not the fashionable world of Paris—for that I care not; but I mean my simple and honest neighbors. I mean the mothers, the wives and the daughters of my native Brittany; they would accuse me, and with justice, too, if I lived with a woman not my wife, in the mansion where my father and my mother yielded up their pure and innocent souls to God."

"Oh! generous, noble heart!"

"Hence, when I offer you, my friend, my hand—but no, no! I will not say that!"

"Speak! I entreat you, without reserve. Your kind and generous feelings are like a balm to my bruised and broken heart. Say on! say on!"

"Well, then, I was about to say, that when I entreat you to receive my hand, it is that you may be to me a sister, without the fear of scandal. Do you understand me? If you are one of those women who can love but once, I, too, am a man whom first love is his last. As your brother, I may continue to love you without reproach; and you can accept my offered hand without a blush."

"But, mon Dieu! what can inspire you with such deep devotion?"

"That you shall know hereafter—when you are mine. Meanwhile, are not your misfortunes sufficient to affect the hardest heart? Is not the fate of that little child, which but now was ready to die upon your bosom——"

"Oh! speak not of it! speak not of it!"

"But I must, madam; and I farther say, that in refusing my offer, you neglect your duty as a mother. What right have you to refuse this child the protection that I offer it? What would become of it, were you to die to-night, or I to die to-morrow?"

"For mercy's sake! say no more!"

"It is in the name of mercy that I speak, madam; that I tell you to have mercy on your child—and not refuse the good fortune which is offered it. Be my wife, and I will give it protection and a name. Then, madam, you can mourn and lament the cruel misfortunes, which have befallen you; and my tears shall mingle with yours, for our sorrows have a common origin; but, before you yield yourself up to all the luxury of wo, provide, while you may, for the safety of your infant, lest its fate be as hard as your own."

"No! no! Impossible—I must not think of it; it would be the basest selfishness and ingratitude—yes, ingratitude to accept your offer."

"But, if you refuse it, what will you do? Work, I think you said; but recollect, that, for a long time, your child must depend upon you, and her wants will increase with her age; and when she becomes marriageable, how will you dispose of her? She will be poor and nameless! What better fate than your own can you expect for her?"

"Oh, mon Dieu! mon Dieu!" cried Therese, raising her eyes to Heaven; she was struck with the sad truth of Ewen's reasoning, and Ewen himself perceived it with secret joy.

"You see, then," he continued, "that you must bend to circumstances."

But Therese was not yet overcome; she still struggled, with a generosity almost equal to that which prompted the noble offer.

"God will not abandon me," she replied; "he will give me strength and length of days to support and bring up my child."

"Strength, poor girl! your health is already broken down by hardship and suffering. Your existence is but a breath—and this I say to you without reserve, because I know full well that, but for your child, you would gladly lay it down."

Therese gave him a look of sad assent, and he went on: "See then the folly, the inhumanity of risking the welfare and the life of your child upon a thing so precarious as your own continuance in this world of sorrow. You are young and handsome; others, I know, may make you the offer which I now make, but upon what conditions? The question, if you live, resolves itself into this: shall you overcome your reluctance to a marriage, or sacrifice the welfare of your child. There may be others whom you would prefer to me, but what guaranty have you for their kindness to your child? What have you for mine? you may ask. The word and honor of a man, who can act as I am willing to act toward you. I say it, without pride and without humiliation."

At this moment Pierre rapped gently at the door and entered, bending under the weight of a matrass, and followed by a number of porters loaded with necessary articles of furniture.

"My dear sister, I have sent this good fellow to procure, at the nearest upholsterers, what will make this wretched place more tolerable for a day or two. Let us go down to his apartment, while this is put in order."

Therese regarded Ewen with an air of melancholy reproach, but took her sleeping infant in her arms, and descended with M. de Ker Ellio to the room of Pierre Ferand.

A comfortable repast, brought from the nearest restaurant, had been placed upon the table, in the tinman's vacant room. A cheerful fire burned brightly on the hearth, and despite her sorrows, of earlier or of late occurrence, Therese, we must confess, sat down with a keen appetite for the food before her. The poor girl had eaten nothing since the day before.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE NARRATIVE.

Thanks to the intelligence and activity of the workmen, and the superintendence of M. de Ker Ellio, who went up from time to time to oversee them, in two or three hours Therese's miserable attic was rendered habitable. The holes in the roof were stopped, curtains were placed at the windows, the walls and ceiling were hung with a cheap, but thick material; the floor was covered with a coarse, warm carpet; an excellent bed was provided and made up, and all the conveniences for a small household were placed in order about the room.

Doubtless, it would have been an easier and more simple mode of providing for the comfort of Therese, to have transported her at once to some respectable hotel, but Ewen feared to alarm the sensitive feelings of the poor girl, by proposing at once so bold a step. She might, and probably would, have refused to remove. But against the provision for her temporary accommodation she could not well object, especially as coming from one who had already announced himself as her brother.

After a day of so much suffering, and such unexpected relief, Therese might well be supposed to need repose. Ewen took an affectionate leave of her, and the grateful girl, offering her hand, said, in a voice broken by emotion: "To-morrow—for you are so kind, that I should be unpardonable not to trust you with implicit confidence—to-morrow I will tell you my sad story, what I have suffered, and, since I have left the house of M. Dunoyer, what I suffer still. Then, and not till then, can you judge whether I ought to accept your noble and disinterested offer."

On the morrow, Ewen found Therese more broken and depressed than when he left her the evening before. The reaction, produced by the intelligence of de Montal's falsehood, had proved more trying than the first shock.

M. de Ker Ellio shook his head. "You have been indiscreet, I fear," he said.

"'T is true—but for my child, I know not to what rash step my despair might have driven me."

"You still love that man," said Ewen sadly.

"Alas!" exclaimed the heart-broken girl.

"I say it not to reproach you; for fatal, cruel as is this love, it is your justification."

"No! I love him not!—or, rather——but let me tell you my story, and then you will better comprehend the wretched inconsistency of my feelings."

"I will hear you, and then I will tell you of myself; that done, let us dismiss the memory of your sufferings, and think of the future—think of the welfare of your child—shall we not, my sister?"

With such tender, affectionate, and respectful kindness, did Ewen utter the words *my sister*, that Therese was melted even to tears. She took his hand, and replied with tenderness:

"Yes, my brother. And now listen to my long and painful confession.

"Before I left the mansion of M. Dunoyer, I craved permission to bid farewell to my mother and sister. This last request was denied. I went with M. de Montal to his lodgings. Where else could I have gone? Among the few friends and acquaintances I had, all were, more or less, connected with, or attached to, M. and Madame Dunoyer; and not one of them would have given me shelter. I had no other alternative than to accompany this man, whom I already considered my husband.

"At first, I admit, that in the selfish joy which I felt at being united to him thus for ever, I forgot the additional expense I should oblige

him to incur, poor as he had represented himself to be. The harshness of M. Dunoyer and the heartless indifference of my mother, saved me from the pangs of remorse. Young, loving, and full of courage, I feared not the future. M. de Montal was all in all to me, and I was happy. He, on the contrary, was sombre, dejected, and almost sullen—and this he attributed to anxiety and distress on my account.

"On arriving at his house, my child-like delight was inexpressible. Everything which belonged to him—everything connected with his former life, was inestimably precious in my eyes; and the poor attempts at display which characterized his whole establishment, seemed to me the efforts of a lofty mind endeavoring in adversity to preserve the reminiscences of better days.

"M. de Montal threw himself upon a fauteuil and buried his face in his hands. I believed him to be, as he said he was, overcome with remorse for the calamities which he had brought upon me. Oh! had I but known that this deep emotion was but chagrin at the disappointment of his own selfish hopes, and vexation at the threatened expense of my keeping, I would not have lived another hour; but I deemed myself the object of his most ardent love, and that love appeared to me the only thing of moment for him or me.

"'*Once married,*' said I to him, 'and the behavior of my family toward me known, we shall become objects of interest and respect. Knowing our misfortunes and your capacity, your friends will not hesitate to come forward to your assistance. What will it cost us to live? A very moderate appointment for you, together with the fruit of my exertions, will be sufficient. We will retire to some remote portion of the city, and you will soon find, my Edward, that you will be happier even in so humble a position, than you were in the days of your opulence andsplendor.'"

"And what answer did he make?" inquired Ewen.

"He replied that he was not born to serve in a subaltern capacity; that he had still some money left, and that his condition was not yet desperate. That through his relations he might, after a time, obtain a foreign consulate, which would be a post at once lucrative and honorable. But, he added, that his moral character might not be called in question, to the injury of his expectations, he thought it best we should live apart until our marriage, and to this end he would procure for me *lodgings in some remote quarter*, where he would spend as much time with me as his necessary avocations would permit. This arrangement, painful as it was in some respects, seemed to me only prudent and proper, and I consented to it at once. The first day we spent together was one of mingled joy and sadness. We were full of plans and projects for the future. I urged upon M. de Montal the propriety of limiting his pretensions to some small post which he could with certainty obtain. I recalled to his recollection our former dreams of happiness in a humbler sphere. Did he fear the raillery of the world? I asked him what man of honor or high feeling would ever think the worse of a friend or companion, who, having sunk his patrimony by dissipation or misfortune, should endeavor to earn a living, and retrieve his circumstances by honest industry? But he was inflexible. He would not, he said, reduce me to such an extreme of humiliation; and in that position, despite of my remonstrances, he intrenched himself.

"The next morning, at an early hour, he departed in search of lodgings for me; recommending to me, as he went out, to admit no one who might call. I remained alone. After some time I heard the door of the saloon adjoining the bedroom where I was sitting, open quietly. I thought it was him. Ah! monsieur! this first proof of his treachery ought to have opened my eyes; but no, I was blind—blind with love."

"And what was it?" exclaimed Ewen.

"A woman—young and handsome. I knew her not, but yet I had some indistinct recollection of her features."

"A woman! and what was she doing there? how came she in the saloon?"

"By means of a key which she possessed. M. de Montal had not, it seems, had time to inform her of my arrival."

"And this woman?"

"Was Mademoiselle Julie, the actress. I cannot describe to you the shame and mortification I underwent from her insolence. Taking me for one of her own class, she abused me most grossly for endeavoring to deprive her of her lover. She assured me that my efforts would be fruitless, for she was certain of the affection of M. de Montal, who doated on her, and who had offered to marry her, but whose character was such, that she had refused him."

"Mon Dieu! and you were subject to all this insult: how much you must have suffered."

"I suffered only from anger, for I believed not one word of it. This tale of Mademoiselle Julie's I considered merely a calumny too absurd, to occasion a moment's uneasiness. At last this woman had the audacity to tell me that she should wait until M. de Montal's return, and then one or the other of us should leave the house, and I should see who that should be. 'If you remain here, I leave it this moment,' was the only answer I deigned to give her. I went into the street to wait his coming. He was already near at hand. I ran to him and told him all. He satisfied me in a moment."

"He satisfied you?"

"Yes; he assured me that it was Mademoiselle Julie, who continued to persecute him with her love, ever since he had discarded her. He said that a long time since he had given her a key to his apartment which he had been unable to get back; and this was the solution of the mystery. I believed him, for I wished

to do so. He told me that he had found in the Rue de Ouest, near the Luxemburg, two apartments in a retired and tranquil mansion, which he had taken, and ordered them to be furnished immediately. I went there with him at once. Not for worlds would I have returned to his house.

"The lodgings which I was to occupy until our marriage were plain and cheap, but the house was neat and tranquil; the neighborhood was quiet, and my windows opened upon the grand garden of the Luxemburg; I was delighted with the solitude and the retirement. We were too poor to afford me a femme-de-chambre, but the porteress, for a trifling remuneration, gave me her assistance in such little domestic matters as indispensably called for it.

"For the few first nights that I slept alone in my new house, I was timid, but from this I soon recovered; and our marriage was now only delayed until the necessary legal formalities could be complied with. M. de Montal professed to be more impatient at our separation than I was.

"Then commenced a peaceful and happy period of enjoyment; happy, too happy, long to last; but the memory of those blissful days will remain with me for ever. It was my first desire to be no longer a burthen to M. de Montal, and that desire I speedily accomplished. I commenced embroidery; my porteress found me customers, and I was soon able to meet my daily expenses. M. de Montal was with me almost every day; he was gay or grave as his hopes or his fears upon the subject of the consulate predominated; but this was not his only trouble—my illegitimacy, he said, very much complicated and retarded the formalities which must precede our marriage, which, most unhappily for him, created further delay. I believed all this, and did my best to comfort him, thinking that his heart was even more tender than my own. It was indeed hard for me to be separated from the man of my choice, but I bore the infliction with patience, and even very much enjoyed myself in glowing anticipations of the future.

"My only unhappy days were those on which I did not see de Montal. I did not then reproach him, but I grieved for him, for I knew that he must suffer more than me. At such times I worked with less energy, and sometimes my mind was clouded with sad and melancholy forebodings; but the next day he would come, my troubles vanished like the early cloud, and my happiness, for the time, was complete.

"Thus passed the first month, during which a day but rarely passed without my seeing him. The next month he was sometimes absent for two or three days together; still I did not blame or reproach him. His exertions to obtain the consulate, and the preparations for our marriage, took up much of his time; besides, what in some measure compensated for his absence, was, that he was now more gay and cheerful than before. This he attributed to the improvement of his prospects and the near approach of our marriage. I partook of his joy, but I by no means relaxed my exertions, for I was determined in no event to leave our fate to future uncertainty.

"A bookseller and his wife—excellent people they were, who occupied apartments in the house where I lodged—observing that I seldom went out, they offered me access to their stock of books. Perceiving by the selections I made, that I understood English, the bookseller inquired whether I thought I could translate some works from that language. You may judge of the joy with which I grasped at so congenial an occupation.

"Thenceforth I rose with the dawn, and took up my embroidery which afforded me a moderate but certain revenue. This I preferred to do in the day time, as by candle light it injured my eyes. M. de Montal, when he came, arrived about two o'clock. The delight of my existence was to receive him in an attire of elegant simplicity, with my hair dressed as he liked. After his departure I returned to my embroidery, and worked till dark; then I lit my lamp, and after a frugal repast, which the porteress brought me, I took my pen and translated till midnight. Ah! the long winter evenings and hours I passed thus alone and melancholy, but not sad nor sorrowful."

"And did he never come to pass an evening with you?"

"Rarely—once or twice a month, perhaps."

"And is it thus such people neglect the blessings God bestows upon them?" exclaimed M. de Ker Ellio, with a sigh.

"M. de Montal was obliged, much against his inclination, as he told me, to go nightly into society, in order to keep up his connection with the men of rank and power to whose influence he looked for success in his application for a consulate; 'one is so soon forgotten,' he added, 'if he is for a moment out of sight, and as my prospect is fair, I must follow it up, and bear the inconvenience as best I may.' Sometimes, however, I went out with M. de Montal; we usually walked on the boulevard Mont-Parnassus, and he reconducted me to my door. These were my fête days, and I returned from these excursions refreshed and happy.

"How sweetly passed the evenings after these promenades with him! My toil then seemed so light, I often wrote till two in the morning. My translations and my embroidery brought me in from ten to twelve francs a day. One of my little rooms I dedicated to my literary pursuits, and I always embellished it with flowers. M. de Montal was fond of them, and I bought them myself at the different florists, who are so numerous in that quarter. Despite of this, my only extravagance," said Therese, with a sad smile, "at the end of two months, I had accumulated about two hundred francs. With what triumph did I give them to M. de Montal—telling him with a kiss, that it

was the first instalment of my dowry; he was astonished.

"'Ah!' said I, 'if you could only bring yourself to renounce your ambitious projects, how happy we could be: Think of it,' I continued, 'the most moderate post, which you could have at once, would, together with my earnings, enable us to live with comfort, nay, with ease, for we have but few wants.' But, alas! he said that he could not endure the thought of my toiling so for ever; he had consented to it, hitherto, only because the extremest economy was necessary, in order to leave him means enough to push his application for the consulship. I dared not tell him that the money already thrown away upon that attempt, would have perchance supported us for years. I scarcely thought of it, for I was so happy, happy in the discovery, that in any event I could myself earn sufficient to mantain us both; this gave me new courage, and more strength."

"Had you heard nothing from your family, all this time?"

"Nothing; they had sent to M. de Montal my clothing and my linen, and some trifling articles which had been presented to me: nothing more."

"Infamous!"

"M. de Montal was desirous that I should sue M. Dunoyer at law, for a maintenance; but I would not hear of it."

"Poor girl!" said Ewen, after some moments of reflection, "I can readily understand how your hours of toil and exertion were the happiest you ever spent, and how the memory of them, though sad, should still be dear to you."

"It is inexplicable; but had I been rich, I should probably have been less happy: my love which was my all of happiness, increased with solitude and toil; it had become as serious as devotion, as sacred as duty itself. My separation from M. de Montal for so long a time, I looked upon as an expiation for my faults. My bookseller was so much pleased, that he increased my salary. At the end of the next month, I had two hundred francs more to give M. de Montal."

"And he took this money?"

"Had I not saved it for him? he needed it more than I. Ah! little did I think how much I should one day miss these little sums, not for myself, but for my child. Afterward, indeed—but, mon Dieu! how I afflict you in speaking of the only happy days I ever knew."

"No, no, my sister, go on; let me know all, for—as you say, I shall then be able to judge of what is most expedient for the future. Do I not know, that the memory of by-gone happiness is the sole consolation of the miserable?"

"'Tis true; the memory of those days has oft-times kept me from despair. But I must now touch upon the event, which was at once the most joyful and the most sad of my existence. It was, I well recollect on the twenty-fifth of March—M. de Montal had not been near me for a week—it was the first time his absence had been so far prolonged. He entered the door, and I threw myself into his arms bathed in tears. 'You weep, my Therese, but it is for joy you ought to weep,' he said, 'I have received the consulate for Lisbon, the salary is two hundred thousand francs—this morning the banns of our marriage were published; such are the fruits of the long absence, which has so much distressed you.' Nothing is more rapid than the transition from sorrow to joy, when glad tidings cheer the sorrowing heart. I could hardly believe M. de Montal; but when I saw his gayety, and looked upon his countenance all beaming with delight, I was convinced. And yet——"

"What! the consulate and the publication of your banns?"

"It was an invention, a falsehood! and his joy, his happiness—shall I tell you, what that arose from? he had made the conquest of Madame de Beauregard."

"What! did he see her then?"

"Daily—but I was anticipating. Permit me to revert for one moment to the last gleam of happiness which shone upon me. That day, M. de Montal said to me: 'Therese, we must celebrate the event which secures our future prosperity, by a day of pleasure. Listen to what I propose. The weather is delightful; we will take a long walk, and then we will dine together like man and wife, in some quiet restaurant; from thence we will go to the play; where, for the sake of privacy, we will take a box with blinds.' Pardon me for repeating all this nonsense to you, and do not wonder that this proposition of M. de Montal gave me real pleasure. Nor was I disappointed. Everything seemed propitious: the day was fair, our walk was delightful; de Montal was in the best of spirits, and I was as full of frolic and caprice as a child of fourteen. We returned, tired and hungry. I made my toilet, while M. de Montal returned to his lodgings for a similar purpose. He came for me, and I accompanied him to a restaurant. Our dinner was excellent; and thence we went, as he proposed, to the play, and never did I enjoy a performance more. I partook of his hopes, and entered into all his anticipations of future prosperity and happiness. The consulate to Lisbon was but the stepping-stone to a brilliant diplomatic career, and fortune and honors were to crown his efforts. We returned to my lodgings, and, upon leaving me, the count mentioned a circumstance, which, the night before, would have caused me a heartache; but which now seemed to me almost a matter of indifference. He said, that, in order to make himself acquainted with the duties of his office, it would be necessary for him to pass ten days or a fortnight at the residence of the former consul to Lisbon, who resided at Melun; but that he would write to me frequently, that his absence might seem the less tedious. So confident was I, so wrapped up in the anticipation of a happy

futurity, that nothing seemed more natural to me than this gross fiction; and I acquiesced, without a murmur, in his departure. What was ten days? We were to be married on the 17th of April; for that was the day he had fixed; why, I know not, unless to give an appearance of greater reality to the deception he was practicing upon me."

"But this consulate, and the journey to Melun, to prepare for it?"

"It was all a fiction, I tell you—a lie from the beginning. In about four days I received a letter from him; it was very kind and affectionate; but somehow, by accident or design, M. de Montal had neglected to give me his address, so that I could not answer it. Some days after this, came another letter, also, conceived in the tenderest terms; but announcing that M. de Montal's studies had turned out to be more arduous than he had expected, and that I must be patient."

"What effrontery! But where was he all this time?"

"At Melun, as he had said; but spending his days with Madame de Beauregard, who had an estate in the vicinity."

"Horrible! But why resort to all these lies?"

"He was desirous to lull my suspicions, lest I should make such an exposure of him as might compromise him with Madame de Beauregard. At last he returned. It was then my turn to meet him with a face radiant with joy. I was *enciente*."

"And did not even that touch the heart of this cruel man?"

"He partook of my joy—at least he professed to—but he had sad news to tell me. The ministry was in danger of being overthrown; and, in order to strengthen it, it had been found necessary to give his consulate to an opponent, who had greater influence than he. Then, in thinking of the child that was yet unborn, I began to dread the future, and lamented bitterly the loss of this imaginary consulship, which I supposed was to put us and it above the dread of poverty.

"From this day, my sorrows came thick upon me. M. de Montal staid away a week; I wrote to him once or twice, and received no answer. At last he made his appearance; but I was struck with his change of manner. He was cold and even surly. The time fixed for our marriage had long passed by; I ventured to remind him of it; he asked me harshly if I wished to worry him: 'But our banns are published,' I replied. 'What of that,' said he; 'the stain that rests upon your birth has raised *new* difficulties. I am doing all in my power to remove them; and, meanwhile, I beg that you will not annoy me by these constant exhibitions of your impatience on the subject.'

"This difficulty about my birth gave me great pain; and more than once the frightful idea occurred to me: what if he were to desert me? some day or other the same reproach would be cast upon my poor child: but I soon comforted myself with the assurance of Edward's loyalty and honor. Two weeks more passed without my seeing him, and I became the prey of constant inquietude. This was not all: my solicitude, and the indisposition attendant upon my state of pregnancy, deprived me of my energy. I could not work as well as heretofore; while, at the same time, the loss of M. de Montal's expected consulship rendered exertion the more necessary.

"Now, alas! I found myself almost incapacitated for labor. Mechanical as the work of translation is, it became more and more difficult, until I executed so little, and that so poorly, that my good bookseller was obliged to transfer his patronage to another. I then betook myself wholly to embroidery, which I could still execute, though with feeble and trembling hand. But how different were the results! By laboring from twelve to fifteen hours a day, I could not earn one quarter of what I used to receive for a single evening's translation; besides, I grew daily weaker and weaker, until at last, one cruel day, my eyes gave out, and I could see no more."

"But this is too horrible. I have suffered, myself; but what right have I to complain, when misery like this exists?"

"After the occurrence of the last scene, which I have described as having taken place between M. de Montal and myself, I saw nothing of him for another fortnight. I wrote, but received no answer. He had prohibited me from coming to his house; but, in my anxiety, I disobeyed him. His servant told me he was not at home—that he dined at his club, and would not return till late at night."

"And was M. de Montal living in luxury, while you toiled day and night? And was it thus he spent the little earnings which you gained so painfully? Oh! soulless wretch!"

"He said that there were expenses incumbent upon his position in society, which it was impossible for him to avoid. The little money I had given him, from time to time, was useless to me. Well, I waited for M. de Montal, in the street, from two o'clock till after midnight. He came not; and, wearied out, I returned to my home.

"The next day, by dawn, I was at his door. The servant told me his master had ordered him not to wake him until noon. I waited in the street till noon. At last I saw him; but how can I describe his anger?—his brutality!—the bitterness with which he reproached me for pestering him with letters, and persecuting him with my presence! Persecuting him with my presence!" repeated Therese, "and I had not seen him for fifteen days. Annoying him with letters! Was it, then, so great a crime to write, when I was devoured with anxiety? He concluded, by assuring me that, if I continued to besiege him thus, he never would fulfill his promise to me."

Ewen de Ker Ellio had listened to the story of Therese, with a mixture of admiration, sorrow, and compassion. But the courage and the resignation she had displayed, seemed to augment, rather than diminish the love he bore her.

No human soul is without its weakness, and Ewen had not been candid in professing that his love for Therese was merely fraternal; not that he had ever dreamed of abusing the rights which, with the name of husband, he must necessarily acquire; but he did cherish within his heart the secret hope that Therese, by lapse of time, by dint of constant soothing and tenderness, and by contrast, might one day be brought to forget de Montal, and to return the affection which he bore her, by partaking of it.

As to Mademoiselle Dunoyer, she was perfectly sincere in her declaration, when she told her benefactor that her heart was dead, and that she could never be other to him than a friend.

This profound conviction of her soul, was the result of a sort of second sight which exists in the heart of woman alone; for she alone is capabable of loving but once, and of preserving the memory of that love for ever.

Then, while the despair of Therese was real, Ewen still nourished in his heart the fondest illusions, while at the same time he guarded, as best he could, against eventual disappointment, by the generous thought, that even at the worst he should give a home and a name to Therese and her child. Adhering, then, to the plan which he perceived had most effectually moved the heart of the mother, in his sentences of the night before; the generous man, in reply to the conclusion to which Therese had arrived, began:

"But your daughter! If she loses you, what will become of her? Recall to mind your own suffering;—will you expose her to the same? Have you the right to refuse her the protection and good fortune which is offered her? and she a girl, the being of all others, the most exposed to misfortune, to degradation, and to shame;—a being who, like yourself, may find her ruin in the overflowing of the same pure and generous sentiment, which caused your own? For, unprotected, a man in seducing her will risk nothing; nothing but her peace, her happiness, and her honor. And are you willing to expose your child, unsheltered, to the storms of life; when a man, in whose honor and loyalty you ought to trust, offers her, as well as yourself, a refuge and a home?"

Therese found it difficult to combat arguments such as these. The chivalric faith and generosity of Ewen, which he breathed forth in his every word, inspired a confidence so profound, that she could not for a moment doubt him. Still, her delicacy revolted at the baseness of a union, of which she alone was to reap the benefit. In vain M. de Ker Ellio assured her, that he should be miserable without her; and that, in being permitted to consecrate his life to her service, he should be the happiest of men. He even offered to secure to her and her daughter, an ample independence, apart from him; but this she would not accept.

The day was spent in argument and entreaty, before Therese, overcome by maternal considerations, consented to his suit. Then, Ewen considering her his wife, removed her from her attic to a retired, but comfortable hotel; and rewarding the kindness of the honest tinman and his wife, with a present of the furniture he had purchased, and a gratuity which relieved them from the necessity of choosing between their clothing and their fuel, at once set in train the formalities necessary to enable him to espouse her.

When he married her, the Baron de Ker Ellio legally recognized the daughter of Therese, as his own; and immediately after, with his heart full of peace and hope, set off for Treff Hartlog, in company with his wife and child.

CHAPTER XXIV.

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We trust the reader has not forgotten the two old servants, whose affliction for the young lord of Treff Hartlog was so tender and touching; Ann Jann, the nurse, and Les en Goch, the soldier of the Vendéan insurrection.

A year had passed since the marriage of Therese and M. de Ker Ellio; and from the conversation of Les en Goch and Ann Jann, we shall learn something of the course of events during that period.

November had arrived: November, *the black month*, which, according to ancient tradition, was so fatal to the baronial house of Ker Ellio. It was but one o'clock in the day; but so thick and dark was the weather, that it seemed like eventide.

Les en Goch and Ann Jann were seated, according to their custom, in the chimney corners of the castle kitchen. The vast apartment was unchanged—the same huge fire-place threw out its fiery light and heat; and the walls were still decorated with the portraits of the saints of Brittany, and the long, narrow window, through its green panes, admitted the feeble light of day, which faintly glimmered upon the polished corners of the old oak tables, and the edges of the black-walnut dresser.

Ann Jann seemed borne down with sorrow. The old Breton, as moody and taciturn as ever, had paid no attention to his wife, who had twice or thrice addressed him.

"Les en Goch, you don't answer me," said Ann Jann, laying her hand lightly upon the shoulder of her husband, who started at the touch; "did you find M. de Rector at the Presbytery?"

"He was gone to Rœvek, to administer the sacrament to a dying man;—happy fellow!" added the old Breton, gloomily.

"Never! I have suspected a liaison, but never thought he could marry a woman of such degraded character."

"But she was immensely rich."

"True, but I could not believe him so sordidly base. Mademoiselle Julie informed me further, that M. de Montal had told her coolly, that he had purposed to marry me as the daughter of a rich banker, and to that end had seduced me; but that, since I had been repudiated by M. Dunoyer, he no longer dreamed of such a thing, and that he had no further feeling for me, except that he was sorry for my misfortune. This is not all; but I cannot—no, I cannot go on."

"Courage! courage!"

"It does seem to me as if the baseness of M. de Montal, to some extent, was reflected upon me. I so loved that man—and even now, with shame I confess it, I recall with melancholy pleasure the memory of that love, but let what I am about to say seem as an expiation.

"This woman told me further, and this time with furious indignation, that, three days before, M. de Montal had come to her with tears in his eyes, and told her that I was about to be confined. He said that his own means were exhausted by my previous exactions, and begged her to lend him a thousand crowns, to save me and my child from actual distress; and she had lent him the same!"

"But this man carries his infamy to a pitch of refinement that I could not have conceived of," cried M. de Ker Ellio, with symptoms of disgust. "There seems no possibility of fathoming the depths of his hypocrisy and degradation."

"This money which he had thus exacted from the actress, was intended to pay the expenses of his journey, in pursuit of Madame de Beauregard, who had left town some days before; at least this woman told me so—and the breaking up of his establishment, confirmed the assertion.

"Mademoiselle Julie had learned the evening before, and from her I learned the fact, that, for several months, M. de Montal had been exceedingly attentive to Madame de Beauregard, whom the world, complaisant as it assuredly is in such cases, still refused to receive. Twice he had followered her into the country; once to Melun, as I have already mentioned. What shall I say of the effect of this detail before me? I was so entirely overcome, that even this bad woman was moved to pity. She wished to follow M. de Montal and expose his baseness, and she tendered relief to me."

"And even this humiliation you were subjected to?"

"I refused her aid and returned to my home. The rest of my story, which is but a tissue of sorrows, I will abridge. Having no longer any resources, I sold my little furniture and went to a common but decent lodging house. When the time of my confinement approached, overcoming my shame and repugnance, I went to the hospital. There I was certain at least of receiving the necessary assistance which I had no other means to procure.

"In about a fortnight, according to the custom, I was dismissed with my infant, then and now the solitary source of all my joy and sorrow.

"When I entered the hospital I had about forty francs, to this sum I managed to make a small addition while convalescent. With a part of my means I purchased this pretty cradle, my last act of extravagance; with the remainder I furnished this wretched garret with a few articles of indispensable necessity; since then I have worked assiduously—but owing to my feeble health, and the constant care needed by my infant, I have hardly been able to earn enough to support life, and I had no wood. When the cold became so intense that I feared my child would perish, I was induced to take a step I had never thought to take; I wrote to my mother—her answer you yourself received. When my kind neighbors came here last evening I was perishing with hunger, and with cold. You now know my history, down to the present day. In spite of myself, I have still cherished the hope that M. de Montal would return; and this hope, vague, flitting, and uncertain as it was, has kept me up. It now only remains for me to tell you that my heart is broken, withered, dead, except to the feeling of maternal affection. The very name of love, the passion from which I have suffered all, causes me to shudder in my inmost soul; I must tell you, too, that despite the base ingratitude of de Montal—despite his treachery, his perjury, his grovelling meanness, I shall ever recall, as the sweetest period of my life, that when I knew him under my mother's roof; and as the happiest, that when in my retreat, in the Rue de Ouest, I worked for him the greater portion of my time, and spent the remainder in the anticipation and the enjoyment of his company.

"This is but little creditable to my spirit, I well know; I ought to forget him, as the husband of another. I should never think of him, but I strive to forget him in vain.

"I repeat, that, for joy or for sorrow, I have no longer a heart. The only sensibility that is left me is concentrated in my child. Yes, my heart is dead; or if it even beats, it is to the recollection of the past—to the memory of joys departed, never to return.

"You now know all," said Therese; "and now you can comprehend why I refuse your offer, noble and generous as it is. What can I be to you?—at most, a cold and heartless companion. Why bind yourself for ever to one whose affections are frozen at their source? Believe me, a heart like yours is worthy of one which can respond to it in warmth and tenderness. Yield not then to a feeling of exaggerated pity; hereafter you will cruelly regret—and not alone will you regret—that you have pushed your greatness of soul to the verge of madness."

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"He was gone to Rœvek, to administer the sacrament to a dying man;—happy fellow!" added the old Breton, gloomily.

"Why do you say, 'happy fellow!' of one about to die?"

"Happy fellow!" repeated the old Breton, with a sigh.

"Happy! those who live, too! Les en Goch, you seem sad."

"Sad as the *black month!*"

"Ah! this *black month!* this *black month!*" murmured the old nurse, mournfully.

"Mor Nader was right," muttered the old Breton to himself. "It is now two years this *black month*, since the chief quitted home to go to Paris. He returned in despair, and ready to die. One year ago, this same month, he returned hastily to Paris, to marry the *white lady;* white as the infernal portrait, which is the image of her. The *black month* is come again. One year, the chief has been married; and his heart is sadder than ever."

"Never," said Ann Jann, who had been attentively listening to the soliloquy of her husband—"never has my foster-son been more broken in spirit than now."

"And never this cursed woman, or rather spectre, more ghastly," added the old Breton. "When will she return to the hell from whence she came?"

"Oh! curse her not! She has lost her little child, and God alone knows how bitterly she has mourned and wept."

"The child was no child!"

"What?"

"It was a phantom!"

"Les en Goch!"

"The woman is not a *woman!* I tell you they were both of them phantoms, which, in the *black month*, come from hell to fright mankind! Mor Nader says so, and he knows all things."

"Les en Goch, why do you always bring in that man? Has not M. l'Abbé de Kerouellan already cursed him from the altar—him and all who have dealings with him?"

"The Lord also cursed Satan; still Satan is Satan, nevertheless."

"But why accuse this unhappy lady? Does not the rector show her all respect and kindness? Does he not spend whole days here, trying to console her for the loss of her baby? Ah! she is no phantom, unless it be the phantom of herself. She is dying of grief, and that is easy to be seen. No, Les en Goch, there is nothing wicked about the poor woman. How kind she is to mothers in poverty and distress! She loves them, and feeds and clothes their children; though they almost break her heart, by reminding her of her own lost son. The poor find bread, and alms, and a shelter at the castle, now the same as ever; and the *white lady* is good to all alike."

Les en Goch shook his head and answered: "The devil takes all sorts of forms."

"He never appears as a poor woman, sorrowing for her child that's gone," Les en Goch

"I tell you he takes all forms. I say this woman is an evil one, because she causes the chief to pine away in sadness."

"But she seems to love him."

"So the grave loves the living."

"The *white lady* never quits him."

"So the fever never quits the sick whose brain it is consuming."

"Les en Goch, you are unjust."

"Unjust! Was our lord, the chief, ever so much broken, even in his worst estate, Ann Jann?"

"Alas! he never was."

"Was he even so much so two years since, when, for the first time, he went to Paris?"

"Alas! no."

"I tell you this *white lady* is his evil angel! The other evening, about nightfall, when supper was ready, I sought all over the castle for my lord and the *white lady;* at last I found them, and where, think you, pray? Ann Jann, I shudder now to tell you—upon the very edge of the parapet of the tower, which overhangs the cliff, whose foot is washed by the sea. The wind blew a hurricane; the moon, from time to time, peeped out from behind the black clouds which were scudding across the sky, and it was by her light that I saw them. The chief and the *white lady* were looking down into the abyss, leaning over it—yes, leaning over it—as if upon the eve of plunging from their giddy height."

"Ah! wo! wo is me!" cried the old nurse, placing her hands over her eyes.

"Wo! wo! to her if I——"

"Les en Goch, hush! hush! be calm! There is that passing here which is beyond your comprehension. But what did you, when you saw my foster-son on such a fearful spot? What said you?"

"I dared not say anything. I feared that if I spoke I might startle the chief, and cause him to lose his balance. I stood still. A sea fowl sailed over the town and filled the air with his wailings. The *white lady* and the chief shuddered and turned away. When I summoned them to supper, their faces were covered with tears."

"Alas! alas! that is too true! How often do they weep!"

"You have seen them! And at meal times what strange glances they exchange. Ah! Ann Jann! I tell you the *white lady* has possession of our master's soul. The rector himself has been deceived by this *phantom;* simple and good men always are deceived by the devil. The *white lady* is an evil spirit, and will destroy this house. Her portrait commenced the work, and she will finish it. I tell you again, she has our master's soul already, and one day she will fly away with it: Mor Nader told me so."

"Mor Nader is a fool."

"He knows what no other man knows. He is like no other man. What he prophesies, always comes to pass."

"Then wo! wo! to this house! But why

did he not predict for us the same fate as for our lord?"

The old Breton made no reply. He sat for a long time pensive and silent, and then muttered in a low voice to himself:

"If I were to kill him, would the prediction still be accomplished?"

"Kill! kill! who, Les en Goch?" inquired the old nurse, with looks of terror.

"Mor Nader."

"Kill him! And the justice of God and man, how will you escape it?"

"When I killed the soldier who was taking aim at my master, I thought nothing of God nor man; I thought only of the chief whom I loved as my child. Twenty times within the last two years, have I hid myself, gun in hand, behind the red monk, that rock by the sea-shore, where Mor Nader goes to sing his spirit-song to the setting sun."

"Is it there, and for that, you have gone so often out at even? God pity you, Les en Goch!"

"Perhaps he has done so; for, though I have had this demon under my gun more than twenty times, something always has prevented me from firing. Sometimes my hand trembled, at others my sight was dimmed. God has not willed it yet."

"Nor does God ever will that you should become a murderer. He himself will punish Mor Nader. But what distresses me, is, that my foster-son so often holds converse with this reprobate. This very month, despite his madness, has he not been on the sea with the wretch? Can he forget, that two years since, in that violent tempest, he nearly perished in his company?"

"Mor Nader says, that he has read in the clouds, that the chief and the white lady shall perish in the storm, during the *black month!*" said Les en Goch, shuddering with horror.

At this moment the door flew open, and Mor Nader, with silent step, entered the castle.

As we have already said, this old man was of lofty stature, his long locks of silvery whiteness fell down on each side of his bronzed and weather-beaten face; his costume was that of the fishermen of the Isle of Seine. A loose capote, of black and massy fabric, covered his broad back and shoulders, but left his brawny chest naked and exposed to the coldest weather, or the wildest storm. His countenance, which ever wore a sinister and malignant expression, was from time to time lighted up, as if with hell's own fires, when his moments of inspiration or madness came upon him.

Despite their bitter aversion against this strange being, both Ann Jann and Les en Goch yielded to an involuntary motion of respect, when he entered the apartment.

Mor Nader advanced toward them, with solemn and measured stride, and glancing with his jet-black eyes—whose pupils were like those of a bird of prey surrounded by a yellow iris—upon the ancient servitors alternately, he said, in a sharp and almost menacing tone:

"The Pen Kan Guer, where is he?"

Les en Goch and Ann Jann looked upon the ground in silence, and made no answer. The old nurse armed herself with her cross.

"Where is the Pen Kan Guer? Where is your master?" repeated Mor Nader, in tones of thunder.

"You know all things—why ask us?" replied Les en Goch.

"I do know!" returned Mor Nader. "He is in the *black month*, which brings to him and to the *white lady* their day of doom!"

"Did you hear that?" whispered Les en Goch to the nurse, who crossed herself devoutly.

The pilot, with his face turned toward the window, which looked upon the sea, stretched out his long and sinewy arm toward the waste of waters, and in tones of wild and wailing music, he chanted the following incantation:

"Under the fog the sea lies sleeping,
Gently the wind o'er its face is creeping;
Old ocean is still as a land-bound lake,
Its billows no more on the white shores break,
And the fisherman homeward wends his way,
While his nets by the slumbering waters lay.
But the crow of the sea, on his dark-flapping wing,
Over land and o'er ocean is hovering;
'Neath that glassy surface of azure hue,
What vision of horror hath gladdened his view!
'Tis the ghastly face of the drowned I ween,
With his visage of purple and eyes of green;
Then higher and higher he rises in air,
Strange and wild are the sights that he looks upon there:
The black rocks, for the waves he no more can discern,
Round the "Race of the Stragglers" the whirlpool doth turn,
His red banners the storm hath thrown out in the west,
His thunder-drum rolls; all in lightning he's drest,
The winds sound their trumpets; right onward they come,
And the billows their coursers are lash'd into foam.
Then the sea-raven speeds to his lov'd Pen-kan-guer,
He hath tidings of moment to speak in his ear."

Mor Nader ceased, and the walls of the castle rung with the peals of his wild and unearthly laughter. "Where is he? where is he? where is he?" screamed the demoniac, in ear-piercing accents.

Ann Jann crossed herself.

It was no longer a man, but a fiend, who came for the soul of her master.

"What would you say to the Pen Kan Guer?" demanded Les en Goch, sturdily.

The pilot regarded him with a mysterious smile of sinister import, and answered, with his finger pointing to the sky:

"What shall happen, who need care,
His destiny is written there."

At this moment, the door was thrown rudely open, and the collossal form of the Abbé de Kerouellan appeared before them. With his face black with rage, and his eyes flashing fire, he strode up to Mor Nader, and seizing him with one hand by the collar, despite his struggles, he dragged him across the apartment.

"You miserable scoundrel!" he cried, "you know what has been, is, and is to come, do you? Then you know that I have promised you a most tremendous flogging; that I am here, and that your flogging is to come; and that without a moment's more delay!"

Suiting the action to the word, the soldier-priest let drive upon Mor Nader's back and shoulders a perfect hurricane of blows, from the butt of his riding-whip, and hurled him out of doors, with the self-exculpatory observation:

"There, damn you! that's the way *I should have served you*, when I was a dragoon!"

Mor Nader, livid with rage, seemed for the moment wholly deprived of reason; his eyes rolled wildly in his head, and finding all resistance vain, he burst forth in a deafening peal of maniacal laughter; when he had recovered himself, he lifted up his hands toward heaven, and muttered some unintelligible words, as if invoking curses upon the castle and its inhabitants; then breaking a black cord, which he wore about his neck, he threw the pieces upon the door-sill where the abbé was standing.

This magic ceremony irritated his military reverence again.

"Cease your mummeries this instant, you audacious scoundrel! or I'll put you through another course of discipline," cried the abbé; "and now, once for all, take your last look at this door, and never show your reprobate face inside of it again. But I'm provided against that already; the officers of justice will have you by the heels to-morrow, and a few years in prison, will teach you some better trade, than that of imposing upon my silly flock, with your pretended sorcery."

While the abbé was speaking, Mor Nader had been busy with his mysteries; he had thrown a little bag, which had been attached to the cord also, upon the door-sill, and then holding in his hands a viol, he cried out as he retreated:

"This philter, priest, is made of the sea-crow's eye, and the viper's heart."

"How? you vagabond!" exclaimed the rector, brandishing his whip, and advancing; "this is a sovereign remedy for witchcraft."

Mor Nader seemed to throw the magic philter upon the castle, and cried out:

"To-morrow, the grave-digger will go his rounds with his bell. He will spread the tidings of death through the land."

The abbé himself was struck with the solemn, and almost awful, manner in which Mor Nader pronounced these words; but as the pilot was retreating with rapid steps toward the sea, he contented himself with shaking his whip at him once more, and then returned to the kitchen.

In that apartment, he found Ann Jann and Les en Goch upon their knees, engaged in fervent prayer.

"Well, well!" cried the worthy pastor; "what the devil are you about now? *as I should have said when I was a dragoon*, are you afraid that old rogue will capsize the castle by blowing at it? It is only because you encourage him, by listening to him, that he comes here with his lies and nonsense. As for you Les en Goch, what is the reason you don't keep a good black-thorn cudgel to rub down his shoulders with, whenever he makes his appearance? There is a kind of exercise in that no magic nor witchcraft can resist; it's better than *Vade Rerso Satanas*; though you can say that too, if you have a mind to, for it does no hurt. But hereafter, do you follow my example; take my method with him, do n't be afraid; if there's any sin in it, I'll give you absolution. Now, where is Ewen? I must speak to him at once."

"I believe the Pen Kan Guer is in the other part of the castle, in the grand saloon, with the *White Lady*:" the old Breton would not call her his mistress.

The rector bent his brows, and threw upon him a withering frown; but, checking himself, merely said:

"No matter now; conduct me to them instantly."

The old Breton arose and preceded the rector up the grand staircase, which led to the state apartments of the castle.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CONVERSATION.

When the Abbé de Kerouellan entered, Ewen was seated alone in a vast saloon, whose windows looked upon the sea. As Mor Nader had described it, the evening was yet calm, and the approach of the storm was already visible from afar. The sun was setting behind a stack of heavy clouds; the ocean was still, but its waters began to take a dark and leaden hue; the wind was hushed, but the drift, thin as yet, but threatening, was scudding from the west.

Ewen, wrapped in meditation, did not observe the abbé's entrance. With his elbows upon the table, his chin resting upon his hands, his eyes red with tears and watching, M. de Ker Ellio looked mechanically upon sea and sky.

The baron was but the shadow of himself; his hollow cheeks, his sunken eyes, his death-like paleness, all betrayed the hidden sorrow which was consuming him.

The rector regarded his former pupil for a while in silence, and then addressed him:

"Ewen! Ewen!" he cried, in soothing tones, "what are you thinking of, my poor boy?"

The baron started, threw upon the abbé a wild and haggard look, and then recovering himself, replied: "It will be a bad night—I was looking upon the sea."

"And thinking, I presume, what a fine time it would be to take an excursion upon the bay. Why, the pilot was here but a moment ago," said the abbé, archly.

Ewen looked down, but made no answer.

The abbé continued:

"Yes, I got here just in time to horsewhip the great magician out of the house. Now, are you crazy? Do you forget how near this wretch came to drowning you two years ago, for the purpose of fulfilling his own predictions?"

Ewen, affecting an ease and gayety which he was far enough from feeling, replied cheerfully:

"Why, you know, father, that I am very fond of sailing excursions, especially accidental ones; since my return, my wife and I have frequently been out with Mor Nader, and the old pilot has always sustained his reputation for skill and fidelity; we have been to the isle of Seine with him."

"But you know that this wretch feigns to believe that the month of November is fatal to your house, and this is that very month. Again, I advise you to beware of him."

"Therese is amused at his eccentricities; there is nothing to fear. As to the fatality of the *black month*, it is one of those things which we must believe without explanation, like some others which pass our comprehension."

"You allude to the picture which was burnt so long ago; but I can explain that perfectly. It was but the canvas which your father tore off from the panel and burnt, but underneath that was a perfect copy of the picture itself. The coloring was imperceptible at first and unobserved, but exposure to the air and light, brought it out and——"

"Oh, I'm perfectly satisfied with the explanation, my friend."

"And then the singular resemblance of your wife to this portrait——"

"Was all the effect of chance, my friend. Besides, what comparison is there between the two? The woman, whom this mysterious portrait represents, horribly tormented my ancestor, and brought him to an untimely end. Therese, on the other hand, is, as you know, an angel of goodness, and makes me the happiest of men."

"Yes; your wife is a model of all that is kind, and sweet, and charitable. She is a woman of rare goodness; and yet you are far from being the happiest of men. You are failing daily."

"My health is poor, but that is the result of the hardships I went through in the insurrection—sleeping upon the ground, and in the open air."

"Oh, no! don't tell me that: you were as rugged as an oak long afterward."

"But, abbé——"

"I tell you, your ailment is not bodily, but mental."

"I assure you——"

"Your melancholy increases daily."

"Why, I never was very gay."

"I don't want you to be gay, but cheerful."

"Again, permit me to tell you, abbé——"

"Oh, you are getting impatient with me; that is the worst sign yet. But I have held my peace long enough. Your heart is seriously wounded. I must be frank with you. I have found out the cause."

"What can you mean?"

"I know everything."

"What do you know?" cried Ewen, in alarm.

"Fear nothing. What I have discovered, is as safe within my breast as the secret of a confessional."

"Well, what is it?"

"You are dying of a hidden grief: you look already like a spectre. You are the most unhappy of men."

"The death of our child has caused me great distress. Is it not natural?"

"I cannot answer that question."

"Why?"

"Don't ask me."

"What do you mean?"

"That it is not the death of *your* child which causes your distress."

"I have already confessed to you that two years since I went to Paris, and, after having seduced Mademoiselle Dunoyer, I abandoned her. Driven by remorse, I returned there last year, married her, and bestowed my name upon Therese and her infant."

"You did tell me this, Ewen—you have thus explained the cause of your cruel sufferings—you attributed them to remorse!—noble, generous hearted man! this was not true!"

"Abbé!"

"Not one word of it. Under the semblance of a crime, you have concealed unbounded magnanimity!"

"But, once more——"

"But, once more, Ewen, you have restored to honor an unfortunate woman, whom a monster had disgraced. I see that you are astonished at the extent of my information."

"It is strange, truly!" said Ewen, in surprise.

"I suspected you, from the first; you are not a man to commit so infamous an action; and then, if you had done so, what hindered you from atoning for it long ago; why did you first think of the atonement when you heard the news of your cousin's marriage? You see your story was inconsistent, every way? You returned here with a wife and a child you called your own."

"Did I not always treat it as my own?"

"Were you ever deficient in kindness, generosity, or delicacy of feeling? The first month after your return, your countenance was radiant with happiness and hope—I confess, that at first I was prejudiced against your wife—but my prejudice speedily yielded to her angelic goodness, and to the affection she manifested for you, though in the latter there was ever something peculiar. One thing, ev-

er confirmed my suspicions. Notwithstanding your uniform kindness to this infant, there were times, when involuntary, and almost imperceptible, manifestations of disgust escaped you. I was convinced that there was something within your inmost heart which revolted at its presence."

"Abbé, abbé! in pity, not one word more!"

"Ewen, my friend, do not think for a moment," said the abbé, taking the hand of his former pupil with tenderness, "do not think I am about to reproach you—you have pushed your magnanimity to the extremest bounds; no, I come to solicit you, to exact—by showing you how much I know already—your confidence entire; I have for a long time hesitated, but I can do so no longer. In spite of my better reason, I am myself disquieted, I know not why, by the approach of this *black month*—it is always stormy upon the coast, and that, of itself, may add to your indisposition."

"Fear nothing, my friend," replied Ewen, smiling; "true, the great Physician will cause me to——"

"It may be so; but this depression—the effects of which I see, and the cause of which I am ignorant of—would it not yield more readily to something which would distract your attention?—a journey say. Listen to me: leave here with your wife as soon as possible; a change of scene will benefit you both. Suppose you pass the winter in the interior."

"Of what would it avail, my friend, if, as you suppose, I am suffering from some hidden sorrow. Would it not go with me wheresoever I went?"

"You grant, then, that there is some hidden sorrow."

"I grant that my melancholy may furnish you with some reason to think so."

"But why this melancholy? Mademoiselle Dunoyer has married you, and forgotten her infamous cousin. It must be so, for she cannot be insensible to your goodness of soul. Still, 't is strange for all—she seems as sad and wo-begone as you——"

"'T is the death of her child, nothing else, I assure you. A mother's regrets are eternal! Believe me, my dearest friend, you alarm yourself unnecessarily on our account; we are improving. For the last few days Therese has felt much better. Did you not meet her, a day or two since, on the meadows, not only cheerful, but almost gay?"

"That very gayety affrighted me; it was what induced me to speak to you to-day."

"But, my friend——"

"I tell you that there was something ominous in that gayety!"

"You are mistaken."

"I cannot be! I read it in your countenance—in that of your wife! It made me tremble."

"But, indeed, abbe, you are wrong: Therese and I were never more confiding in each other than at that very moment. Our interchange of thoughts, during our long walk, had been complete and unreserved; our communication had never been more frank, more intimate, nor more sweet."

"Unhappy man! you cannot see yourself, as I do. Your words are ingenuous, and persuasive enough; but, when I look upon you, the tears come into my eyes. My heart is ready to break! I have a terrible presentiment of evil! Ewen, conceal nothing from me, in Heaven's name!"

"What mean you! abbé? I have nothing to conceal!"

"My instinct enables me to discover the bitterness which is covered over by this apparent frankness, and complacency! Your forced tranquillity alarms me. Ewen, Ewen! My dear, dear son! I supplicate! I entreat you, trust me! I have, hitherto, borne this in silence: but, to-day, you terrify me! I will not leave you, till you satisfy me!"

"But, how? my best of friends! I tell you, that I have nothing to conceal—nor has Therese; her grief, on the contrary, seems to moderate! She loves me dearly, and I return her love! The loss of her child but binds us closer together! We are both of us by nature melancholy. I, you know, was never gay. The health of Therese is feeble; mine is poor. But we are young. We shall out-live all these things—everything but the solemn reveries which properly appertain to dreamers, such as we! Believe me, my friend, we conceal nothing from you. And, as to the fatal influence of the *black month*," added Ewen, with a smile, "it is hardly in character, for an old free-thinker, like you, to trouble yourself with such a superstition! Do you want me to remind you of your own comments upon it, some year or two ago: 'Why should it be more fatal than May? If the leaves fall in autumn, do they not sprout again in the spring-time?' Fear nothing, my good old friend! We shall pass many a *black month* together yet; though you may have to reproach my wife and I again, for indulging in our dreams and reveries!"

The Abbé de Kerouellan regarded the baron doubtingly; and, at length, with eyes still moist, he answered him:

"I am but too anxious to believe you—too willing to trust you, my dearest Ewen. Still, I cannot help feeling some vague presentiment—the presence of Mor Nader—but, I thank God! after to-morrow, I shall have no more trouble, with that old scoundrel! Oh! I had forgotten—within the hour, as I returned to my presbytery, a letter was put into my hands, from my correspondent at Rennes, who says that your father-in-law, M. Dunoyer, is embarrassed. It is reported that he has suspended payment. I know not whether this interests you!"

I thank you, my friend, fortunately I have

withdrawn my funds in time; but, in any event, it would have been of little importance."

"What! of little importance? More than a third of your estate!"

"I meant to have said, my dear friend, that, my funds being safe, it was of very little importance to me whether M. Dunoyer failed or not."

"Well, my son, you have managed to reassure me a little, and I feel somewhat easier. Now I will go to Pont Croix, upon the business of that respectable old gentleman, to whom I administered, a while ago, a little discipline, *a la mode dragoon*."

"And what are you going to do now?"

"Oh, as he has the honor to be a protegé of yours, I'll tell you that to-morrow, at dinner—that is if you will give me a dinner here?"

"With the greatest of pleasure," replied Ewen, concealing his embarrassment from the Rector; "I would ask you this evening, but Therese is indisposed."

"Well, well; I'm getting childish. I'm easily alarmed and easily appeased; I'm almost satisfied already. Adieu, then, till to-morrow; but I warn you, Ewen, I shall return to this subject again;" and he held out his hand affectionately.

The baron shook it heartily; he was upon the point of throwing himself into the abbé's arms, and telling him all; but he constrained himself.

The abbé departed, and Ewen, for a long time, paced the apartment alone. The night came down, and the wind began to rise.

At six o'clock, Les en Goch announced dinner. Ewen found Therese in the *salle à manger*. The repast was short and silent; and after it was concluded Therese and M. de Ker Ellio betook themselves to the grand saloon, where the abbé had found the baron.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HEART OPENED TO HEART.

The saloon was hung with tapestry of a sombre red; the windows opened upon the sea, and the vast apartment was dimly lighted by a single shaded lamp.

The wind was rising fast, and already blew with violence; the sound of the waves was heard as they beat upon the rocky shore; the rain, in heavy drops, began to drum upon the window-panes, and through the long corridors of the castle sang the breeze, as it penetrated through the walls.

M. de Ker Ellio sat before the fire, absorbed in thought, with his face hidden by both his hands. Therese, pale and emaciated, gazed with an abstracted look upon the glowing embers. She was motionless, and looked the statue of grief. After a long silence, she addressed her husband:

"Will Mor Nader return, in spite of the threats of the abbé?"

Ewen raised his head, and smiled bitterly.

"He will return:—we are in the *black month*."

"He predicted this tempest; will it continue till to-morrow?"

"There is no doubt of it, Therese."

Ewen rose and paced the saloon for sometime in silence; he then approached his wife, and said: "If you wish to write to any one, now is the time; there is more dignity in silence."

"You are right. When I shook the hand of our good abbé, I bade him farewell from the bottom of my heart. How far is it hence to the point of Kergall, by the sea?"

"Two leagues."

"And this wind is unfavorable?"

"No pilot would attempt the passage with this wind; it would be certain destruction." Then, in a solemn tone, M. de Ker Ellio added: "Therese, have you not reflected?"

"I have."

"And you are resolved?"

"I am."

"I am criminal in consenting."

"The crime is mutual, then; for the resolution is. Who first suggested it, I know not; but you, at least, selected the anniversary of our marriage, for our ——"

"Deliverance, Therese. Have I done wrong?"

"Oh! no; but you—are you resolved?"

"I trust to be so, to-morrow—only sometimes—one thought—"

"What is it?"

"The suicide incurs eternal torments!"

"But we are not suicides, my dear. Mor Nader proposes to us an excursion by sea, and we accept his offer."

"True; and we will leave this interesting question for casuists to debate. Our burthen is too heavy to be borne, and we must lay it down."

"Whom do we injure, Ewen? No one."

"No one, Therese."

"You gave me your hand nobly. I accepted it for the sake of my infant, who is gone. I have loved you as the kindest of brothers, and yet, what a life have we lived?"

"Wretched! oh, wretched!"

"Friendship will do nothing for us. To this hour I can never forget the man who has so basely abandoned me. And you, who love me with devotion so unbounded, I cannot love in return. This is fatal. What's to be done?"

"That which we are about to do, Therese."

"Why should we live. You cannot overcome your love for me. I cannot return it, and forget that man. We strive in vain—the struggle only wears us out: let us begone."

After a moment's silence, Ewen said, suddenly, "I should like to know what M. de Montal is doing and thinking of at this moment; when his evil deeds are just upon the eve of hurling two of God's creatures into eternity. Let us see: it is about two o'clock; he should be at the opera, or at some ball with the abandoned creature he has married for her wealth." And then, elevating his voice, exclaimed in bitter irony, "Pardon, Therese, we deserve our lot. You are young and handsome; I am rich. Our hearts are dead. Suppose—as the human race is odious to us—instead of shunning them by a hasty death, we devote our youth, our hearts, our gold, and our energies to vengeance, and return upon our kind, ill for ill?"

"Poor Ewen!" replied Therese, smiling sweetly, "we were never made to play that part—we should be but awkward hands at vengeance."

"True," replied Ewen, smiling in his turn, "I have not the power to be wicked—my heart is broken; I have lost all hope—but why should I conceal it at this last hour, Therese? I have hoped, and hoped in you."

"You had a right to hope, knowing your own worth; but tis my misfortune not to deserve such love as yours. I confess it now with shame, my Ewen, that even now, I regret the few happy hours of hope and love I once experienced with another."

"And you are justifiable in so doing; its constancy is all that redeems your love for such a man," replied Ewen. "Oh, what an unfathomable abyss is the human soul," he continued; "to obtain your love—to efface the memory of this butcher from your soul, has been my unceasing endeavor and my most ardent prayer. Yet, had I succeeded, I I could not so much have esteemed you. I could not have said, with so much desperate satisfaction, Therese is one who knows no second love."

"And hence, look at the fatality of our position, Ewen: had I seen you first, I should doubtless have loved you to the exclusion of any other."

"You would have loved me, Therese—hence the mortal nature of my malady."

"And now, by what strange law of nature am I incapable of enjoying the love and happiness you offer me. What is the secret of this cursed influence which this man—who has heaped upon my head so many sorrows—still exercises upon me. Oh, I know not; I can only say with you, 'what an unfathomable abyss is the human soul.'"

"It is that you cannot love me as a lover, Therese. Terrible thought—fatal as destiny itself."

"But, my good, my noble brother, I cannot love you as a lover."

"The difference between the kindest friendship and human passion is what divides us: is this weakness, or is it grandeur of soul?"

"'T is both, Ewen. We are worthy, both of us, of making such great sacrifices—of contending for this superiority in generosity—but it is in vain. We must die, and we wait with impatience for our doom."

"But tell me, Therese, is this indeed weakness or greatness of soul, which hurries us onward to despair for so slight a difference of sentiment?"

"This little difference of sentiment, which souls of coarser mould would disregard, is to us insufferable. How hearts like ours should not unite intuitively, is inexplicable; perchance love cannot exist between two who so nearly resemble one another. And ah! fearful thought! I have a revelation to make you of the depravity of the female heart. It is horrible—it is degrading; but still it is true that the voice which ever falls in sweetest accents on our ear, is not the most inviting; and that a course of unvaried kindness is by no means prized as it should be by those upon whom it is lavished. And then, too, there is such a joy, such a pride in pardoning a wrong—to love those who cherish us, is so easy; what effort, what courage does it require? What suffering or anxiety does it inflict or cause?"

"You are right, Therese; some must partake of sorrow as well as of joy. If this man should write you to-morrow, come——"

Therese remained silent for a few moments, and then replied:

"My heart died with my infant."

"And the death of that child destroyed the latest hope I cherished."

"What mean you, Ewen?"

"At this sad hour, I feel a melancholy satisfaction in confessing all the inmost feelings of my heart. When your infant died, I——"

"What, Ewen? what would you say?"

"You saw with what care I nursed the little child. Its last sigh was breathed within my arms."

"I saw it."

"Well, well—but no, it is too frightful!"

"Go on."

"It's death."

"It's death?"

Ewen remained sometime in silence and embarrassment, and at last he said, with an air of hesitation:

"The life of this child was the last tie which bound you to de Montal. When that tie was broken——"

"You could not avoid hoping——"

"Alas!"

"It was but natural, Ewen—I should rejoice at the death of Madame de Montal."

"Is there not a heavenly joy in quitting such a life!" cried Ewen.

At this moment the fury of the wind re-

doubled, and the roar of the sea was like the thunder.

"What a hurricane, Ewen. It seems as if it would raze the castle to its foundation."

"Blessed be the storm, my Therese! it betokens a fearful day to-morrow. Our voyage to Kergall will be eventful!"

Therese clasped the hands of Ewen within her own, and answered:

"Courage, my brother, our destiny will be accomplished; to strive with it, were vain."

"And a strange destiny it is," responded Ewen.

Their conversation ceased for the while, and they listened in silence to the storm. It shook the castle of Treff Hartlog to its foundation; the lamp and the fire shed but a feeble light. From time to time, the moon emerging from the black clouds, which fled before the wind, threw her rays into the gloomy apartment—midnight sounded from the parish church of the Abbé de Kerouellan. Unable to overcome his anxiety on Ewen's account, the good abbé was at his devotions. He prayed not alone—in a lower part of the castle of Treff Hartlog, the ancient servitors, Ann Jann and Les en Goch, prayed also for the soul of its master.

It was a fearful sight to see two such beings like Ewen and Therese, in the bloom of life, and surrounded with all the appliances of happiness, looking fearful and impending death, so calmly in the face.

The tempest raged with increased violence; the rain, driven by the wind, descended the chimney, and extinguished the fire. Ewen and his wife sat immovable, plunged in a sombre revery. Therese was the first to break the silence. With a sad smile, she said to her husband:

"How capricious is the range of thought! What think you, Ewen, was passing through my mind? but now——"

"What, Therese?"

"I was thinking of one of those quiet and peaceful evenings which I spent alone, when a girl, some two years since; some unmerited reproaches from my parents, had been followed up by a confinement to my chamber, as a punishment. My sister, and my governess, had been taken to the play; and I, left at home, enjoyed the quiet hours in reading and weeping over the magic pages of Chateaubriand, and longing for a life in the solitudes of Brittany. Who would have believed that, in two short years, I should myself be a dweller in my much-loved Brittany: the wife of one as kind, as tender, as chivalric as the René, that I loved, and yet unhappy—yes, unhappy, mournful, sad, even to the verge of madness!" added Therese, overcome by her emotion.

"'T is strange, Therese; and yet 't is true, that my thoughts so nearly assimilate to your own. Two years ago, I too, was worshipping the ideal: I knew you not, and yet I dreamed of you. Your image was before me. I said to myself: 'How improbable, that such a being should exist! How much more so, that she should ever be mine!' How wonderful would it have seemed, nay, how impossible! if I had been told, 'the dream-girl of your soul is in the flesh—she shall be yours. She will be by your side, and love you *as a brother!*—and yet your soul shall be sad, sad even unto death.'"

"And yet our wild imaginings are all accomplished, and we are, as we are. And now, what is life to us? What ties? what pleasures? what interests attach us to our being? Is it the little good we do? How often have you said: happy are the rich! the good they do, lives after them! The worthy abbé de Kerouellan, will execute your wishes: he will take care of our poor—and our old servants ——"

"Oh! speak not of them, Therese, it unmans me. I must forget my ingratitude to them, poor nurse!—poor Les en Goch! Could you but know his fidelity, his courage, the strength of his attachment! And then, my nurse! after our parents, to whom do we owe so much, as to her, who has watched over our infant years? Poor couple! they will miss me, when I am gone! they will grieve to death, when they see me no more! At this sad hour, there rings upon my ear the wild and melancholy legends of my country, with which Ann Jann was accustomed to soothe my childhood's years! And while you was far away, in your sweet and innocent girlhood; I was listening to the internal repetition of my nurse's chant of other days."

"My request may seem strange, Ewen; but repeat to me, I pray you, those words whose memory is so precious to your heart. The wild legends of Brittany have ever had a charm irresistible to me."

"And would you, Therese——"

"I would have you repeat them; it will calm my troubled spirit."

"Who could believe, that our last hours should be thus spent? And yet, Therese, what can be more appropriate, when quitting life, than to recall to mind the hours of former happiness? But be indulgent to my legend, dear Therese; its charm is in its simplicity of thought and diction; it is a Breton chant, with little of music, and of metre, nothing."

Ewen, then, in a mournful voice, repeated the following lines, supposed to be the complainings of a girl of tender years:

"While musing by the river's side, I heard the sigh of the bird of death.

"'Tina! little Tina,' it whispered, 'know you not that you are sold—sold to the Baron of Janioz?'

"'Am I, mother? tell me, mother, pray; am I sold to the Baron of Janioz?'

"'Poor little one! I know not: ask thy father, dearest.'

"'Am I father? tell me, father dear—has the Lord de Janioz bought thy daughter?'

"'Sweet child, I know not; ask thy brother, love.'

"'Laneick, my brother, tell me—am I sold to that proud lord?'

"'You are; you must at once away—this instant you must go to him. Your price is paid—fifty crowns of silver bright, and as many more of yellow gold.'

"'Dear mother, how shall I attire me? in my robe of red, or in the snowy white my sister, dear Helena, wove me?'

"'No matter how,' my brother cried;—'haste! haste! the black horse, housed in black, is at the door, and champs his bit in fury—haste! the night approaches.'"

Ewen paused, overcome with emotion—Therese was bathed in tears. Ewen continued:

"Tina had not left the hamlet far, when she heard the bells toll solemnly—she wept.

"'Adieu! adieu, St. Anne!' she cried; 'adieu! spires of my country and my home, adieu!'

"She passed the Lake of Anguish, and she saw a throng of the dead.

"She saw the dead, all dressed in white, in boats upon the lake—their number none could tell.

"Her head drooped on her breast; her teeth chattered with affright.

"When she passed the Vale of Blood, the dead swept after her upon her path."

Therese trembled: she looked about her in terror, and said to Ewen: "My brother! my brother! the icy moisture stands upon my forehead! to-morrow, when we have passed the boundary of time, perchance we, too, like Tina, shall see the Lake of Anguish and the sheeted dead; perchance, from that bloody vale, the dead will follow us!"

"How often have I thought, Therese, if any physical impression can be felt by the soul when it has left the body."

"To-morrow, brother, to-morrow, for us, this fearful mystery will be solved—to-morrow we shall know what is hidden from all the living. Is not this a consolation?"

"I dread not death, Therese, but on your account."

Therese placed her small thin hand upon his lips, and said, "Go on with the story of poor Tina."

Ewen kissed that hot and feverish hand, and continued:

"The Baron of Janioz said to little Tina, whom he had from her brother bought:

"'Sit down till the repast is served.'

"The baron sat by the fire—his countenance was black as night, his hair and beard as white as snow, his eyes were living coals.

"'Come,' said he, 'little one, whom I have coveted so long—come, beauty, come and see my wealth—go with me, and count my stores of silver and of gold.'

"'I had rather be with my mother, and count the chips I throw upon the fire.'

"'Come down into my cellar, and taste my sparkling wine.'

"'I would rather drink the water of the meadow with my father's horses.'

"'Come with me to the shops, and buy a shawl of price.'

"'I had rather have a gown of stuff, that my mother had made me.'

"'Come and select some garlands for your hair.'

"'I prefer the plait of black my sister platted for me.'

"'Will nothing please you, little Tina? Fool that I was to buy you, when naught will satisfy you!'

"'Sweet birds, that fly around me,' said little Tina, 'hear my voice. You can revisit my native village—I cannot; you are joyful—I am sad; bear my love to those at home—to the dear mother who bore me—to the kind father who cherished me—to the poor priest who christened me—to each and all, my love and my farewell; my pardon to my brother.'

"Two or three months after, at an hour when the family of little Tina were buried in slumber, and dreaming at the midnight hour—when all was silent as the grave, within doors and without—a sweet and gentle little voice was heard at the door:

"'Good father, dear mother,' it said, 'for the love of God, pray for my soul! attire yourselves in black, for your Tina is on her bier.'"

"Poor, poor Tina!" sobbed Therese; "how touching is the story of her fate!"

"I cannot describe to you, Therese, my feelings; as I recite it, I seem to hear my old nurse's voice, as when she lulled me to sleep with this sad ditty, as I used to sit upon her knees."

A long silence succeeded, and the mournful pair again were lost in revery.

The wind roared unceasingly, and at last the day began to dawn.

"Therese," said Ewen, breaking the silence at this solemn moment, "have you no feeling of hatred against this man who has so deeply wronged you?"

"None! my last prayer will be for his happiness. Yes; and if, as poets say, that heaven is a repetition of the choicest joys we have known on earth, then, if God receives me into paradise, will my love for Edward be eternal."

With such an appearance of fervent since-

rity did Therese pronounce these words, that Ewen's head dropped in silence and despair.

"Forgive me—forgive me! dearest brother! I have wounded you. Ah! how can I—how can I, repair the wrong?"

"Let us embark with Mor Nader at once!" replied Ewen, with a sombre and desperate air.

The first light of day began to penetrate the apartment; from time to time snatches of a wild and mournful song were heard, as the tempest for a moment intermitted its violence.

It seemed a voice from heaven. "Listen, listen, Ewen!" cried Therese:

"It is the voice of Mor Nader."

"What mean those words?"

"Their meaning is but sad; listen."

And he translated the Breton improvisation of Mor Nader:

"King Death, he raps at the castle door;
Then tremble the hearts that ne'er trembled before;
King Death, he stands at the castle gate;
Are you ready within?—I wait, I wait!"

"That is his meaning, Therese."

The voice continued:

"Ewen, Ewen, read me those words!"

"They are more sombre than before. Listen, Therese."

"A winding sheet, and of plank six feet,
A pillow of straw beneath his head,
Four cubits of earth, in all, complete,
Is the wealth allotted to all the dead!"

The voice continued:

"What says he now, Ewen?"

"Alas! poor woman! his strain is heart-rending to the mother's ear!"

"Mother of God! on thy throne of snow,
Look down in pity on us here below!
Thy son in glory is with thee on high,
While the mothers of earth o'er their lost ones sigh!"

"Thus runs the song."

"My daughter! oh, my daughter!" groaned Therese.

The voice continued.

"What says he now!" cried Therese, whose maternal griefs were awakened anew.

"Still the same mournful strain, poor mother!"

"My loved one has left me, beyond the sky;
It cannot list to its fond mother's cry.
Then send me death, Mother, that henceforth I may be
For evermore, with my child and with thee!"

"Yes, death, death!" exclaimed Therese, running eagerly to the window, and looking out upon the morning.

Ewen followed his wife, to look for Mor Nader. At the extremity of one wing of the castle of Treff Hartlog, as we have already mentioned, stood a ruined tower, and a view of this tower was commanded from the windows of the saloon. The dark clouds, their edges tinged with red, sailed rapidly through the air. The sun was rising behind a huge bank of fog, the margin of which was empurpled by his beams; the sea, lashed into foam by the wind, rolled its huge breakers ceaselessly on the rock-bound shore.

On the summit of the ruined tower, his lofty form thrown into gigantic relief, his white locks waving in the wind, stood Mor Mader—the very incarnation of the spirit of the storm. The chief threw open a window; Mor Nader, with solemn and mysterious mien, pointed to a little creek where danced a fragile bark. It was black; and, seen from afar, looked strangely like a coffin.

Then rang out a few words more of mystic song from the fearful being, whom the hapless couple were about to invest themselves.

"What says he, Ewen?" cried Therese.

"He calls us—listen."

"No earthly bell, my departure shall toll,
No priest o'er my body shall pray for my soul;
But the sea, the sea——"

Therese and Ewen exchanged a look of sad despair.

Les en Goch, who had watched and prayed, through the night, slept soundly in the morning.

Ewen and Therese passed unheard by his doors.

THE BAY OF TRESPASSERS.

Dark are the tempest-driven clouds—dark the tempest tossed waves, and dark the rocks of the bay of Trespassers, over which the tempest drives the sea.

Dark is Mor Nader's fragile bark, as it rides upon the stormy waters—it waits for the ill-fated couple, as if it were their bier.

Behind it tower the breathing cliffs of granite—around it dash the furious waves—before it rages ocean in its fury—nor house, nor tree, nor shrub are to be seen. A curse has swept over the spot, but the voice of the storm is up, and the sea beats in thunder upon the cliffs; and, above all, rises the chant of Mor Nader.

Perched upon a rock he thus apostrophizes; his gloomy bark whose sails of red are flapping in the wind, and which springs with every billow as if it would break from its fastenings.

"Black Barque, Black Barque—would you leave the prey you seek to bear away? It comes—wait—wait, it comes; listen—listen.

"From the cold abyss the waves cry out, Mor Nader, we are ready. Where is Ewen de Ker Ellio?—where is the *white lady?*

"The sea weed, fit wreath to wind about the temples of the drowned, waves its long and slimy arms, and cries, Mor Nader, I am ready. Where is Ewen de Ker Ellio?—where is the *white lady?*

"Lifting high their thousand granite points, on which are hung the bodies of the castaway,

the reefs cry out, Mor Nader, we are ready. Where is Ewen de Ker Ellio?—where is the *white lady?*"

"Sharpening their pointed beaks and their trenchant claws, the sea-crows, ravenous for flesh, cry out, Mor Nader, we are ready. Where is Ewen de Ker Ellio?—where is the *white lady?*

"Will you leave your prey, Black Barque? Wait—wait; it comes—it comes—"

"Ewen de Ker Ellio, you are late."

"We are yet in time, good pilot."

"Woman, you come late."

"Good pilot, for the last time I was fain to kiss the earth which laid above my babe."

"Ewen de Ker Ellio, we are in the *black month*—is your last prayer said?"

"Good pilot, weigh your anchor."

"Woman, your ancestress wrought her ancestor's death. You have sealed the doom of Ewen de Ker Ellio. Is your last prayer said?"

"Good pilot, set your sail."

"We are afloat."

"We are afloat."

"Therese, our haven is eternity!"

"Ewen, eternity!"

On the morning of the anniversary of the marriage of Ewen and Therese, their bodies were found upon the shores of the domain of Treff Hartlog. Neither Mor Nader nor his bark were heard of more. His name was never after spoken, but with terror, by the fishermen and peasantry of that part of Brittany. In the eyes of this mild and simple people he was an incarnation of the evil one—he had predicted that Ewen de Ker Ellio and the *white lady* should perish in the *black month.* They had perished.

The bodies of the last baron of Treff Hartlog and his wife were buried by the ancient servants of his house. The dirge was chanted, and the masses said by the good Abbé de Kerouellan. According to the last wish of the deceased lord, the bodies were interred in the cemetery of Treff Hartlog, one on each side of the infant of Therese. Its little frame reposed for ever between those whom in life it had separated for ever.

On the evening of the funeral, the fire in the kitchen of Treff Hartlog was extinguished; darkness pervaded the vast apartment; and but for the sobs which burst upon the ear, it might have seemed the dwelling of the dead rather than of the living.

The storm was hushed, the stars shone out in all their glory, and at midnight the rising moon threw her rays through the long and narrow window, upon the sable-clad forms of Les en Goch, the soldier, and Ann Jann, the nurse.

They were sitting beside their cold and cheerless hearth, their faces hidden, overcome with grief.

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